NEW BEGINNINGS

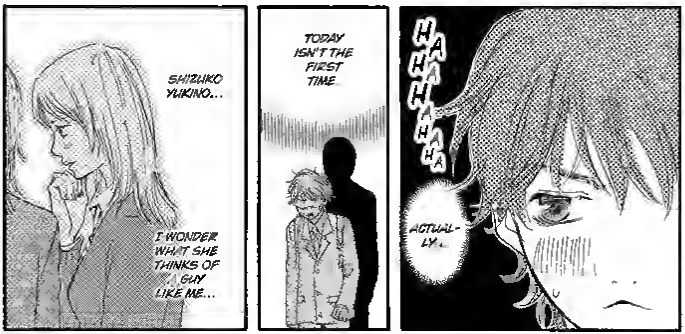
PART 1

SOMEWHERE IN THE KANSAI DISTRICT...
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
HONESTLY-
I-
JUFF
JUFF
GRL
FONDLE
AHRGH, HIS NOSTRIL-FLARING PANTING IS PISSING ME OFF!
NO, NO - JUST CALM DOWN - THERE'S NO POINT IN LOSING IT IN A PLACE LIKE...
?!
YIKES!
I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WEIRD WHEN HE KEPT PRESSING UP SO CLOSE TO ME...
KA-TAK
WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT TOUCHING ANOTHER GUY'S ASS?!
I DON'T GET IT!
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
GROPE
I DON'T UNDERSTAND PEOPLE WHO DO THIS
TOUCH

LAST STRAW
SNAP
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?!
YOU JACKASS!
GRAAAAAAAAAH
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THEM. THEY CREEP ME OUT.
OH -
IS THIS "T" HIGH SCHOOL? THIS IS THE STATION-MASTER AT STATION A, AND -
WELL, ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS,...
"EXCESSIVE SELF-DEFENSE"?!
1 - A
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE TARDY TODAY!
STILL, YOU HAVE TO ADMIT- YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO PUNCH SO HARD YOU KNOCKED OUT A TOOTH.
DON'T BE STUPID!
I'M THE VICTIM HERE!
THERE WAS NO REASON FOR THE STATIONMASTER OR THE POLICE TO LECTURE ME!
YOO-HOO! SAKURADA-CHAN! ♡

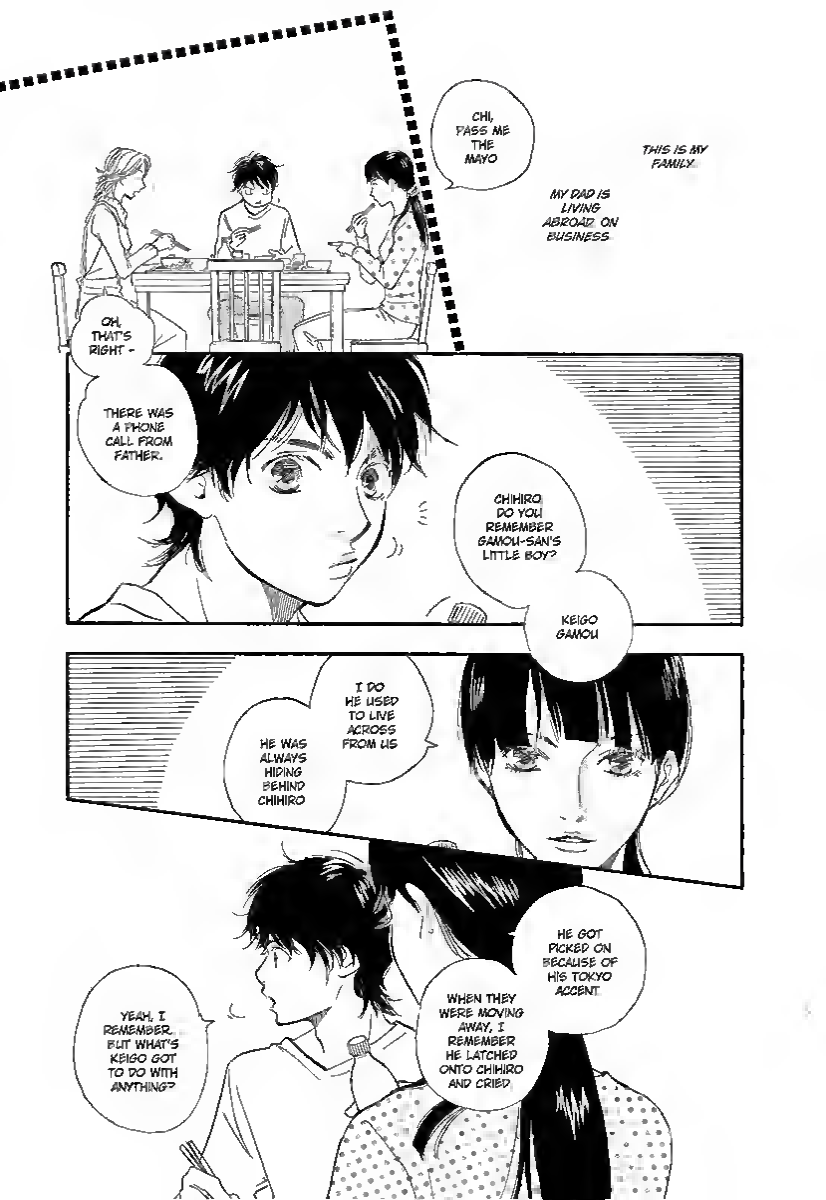
SHIZUKO SAW IT, TOO
?!
OH, JUST LEAVE ME ALO-...
HEE HEE
GIGGLE
SO I HEARD YOU GOT FELT UP BY A PERVERT TODAY ON THE TRAIN?
CHIE-CHAN HERE SAYS SHE WAS IN THE SAME CAR AND SAW THE WHOLE THING!
RIGHT, SHIZUKO?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN AN ORDEAL FOR YOU, SAKURADA-KUN
NO
...I WAS IN THE NEXT CAR OVER...

HE CAN'T HELP IT IF THEY MISTAKE HIM FOR A GIRL!
IT'S CUZ SAKURADA-CHAN IS SO PETITE AND CUTE-
AN ORDEAL, EH...
BUT WHAT'S UP WITH SAKURADA THAT HE GETS FELT UP BY A DUDE?!


SHIZUKO YUKINO...
I WONDER WHAT SHE THINKS OF A GUY LIKE ME...
TODAY ISN'T THE FIRST TIME
HAHAHAHA
ACTUAL-LY...

I'M HOME -
OH, MISUZU - WELCOME BACK
"SO PETITE AND CUTE -"
DAMN IT ALL...
WHO AM I KIDDING. SHE WOULDN'T WANT A GIRLY-MAN LIKE ME!
DAMN IT
HE TOUCHED ME IN FRONT, TOO... HOW HUMILIA-TING...

SAKURADA
DU-DUM
CHI!
I HEARD YOU RAN INTO A PERVERT TODAY?!
WHA-
HOW DO YOU KNOW?!
ALL THE GUYS AT STATION "A" ARE FANS OF MINE.
OH, MOM.
IT'S ODD, ISN'T IT - HE STILL WOULD'VE BEEN A LAUGHING-STOCK ANYWAY, WHETHER HE WAS THE GROPER OR THE VICTIM
CHIHIRO! NO SNACKING BEFORE MEALS!
I THOUGHT IT WAS CHIHIRO WHO'D DONE THE GROPING!
REALLY, I WAS SO SHOCKED WHEN THE POLICE GAVE ME A CALL.
OH, I'M FRIED PORK CUTLETS!
THEY TOLD ME, "YOUR LITTLE BROTHER ATTACKED A GROPER AND IT BECAME A SITUATION."
THEY EVEN OFFERED TO LET YOU RIDE IN THE WOMEN-ONLY CAR IF YOU WANT.


CHI, PASS ME THE MAYO
THIS IS MY FAMILY.
MY DAD IS LIVING ABROAD ON BUSINESS
OH, THAT'S RIGHT -
THERE WAS A PHONE CALL FROM FATHER.
CHIHIRO, DO YOU REMEMBER GAMOU-SAN'S LITTLE BOY?
KEIGO GAMOU
I DO HE USED TO LIVE ACROSS FROM US
HE WAS ALWAYS HIDING BEHIND CHIHIRO
HE GOT PICKED ON BECAUSE OF HIS TOKYO ACCENT
WHEN THEY WERE MOVING AWAY, I REMEMBER HE LATCHED ONTO CHIHIRO AND CRIED
YEAH, I REMEMBER. BUT WHAT'S KEIGO GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?

IT SEEMS KEIGO-KUN HAS BECOME A SHUT-IN AND THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT HIM
OH, YES -
SO WHAT'S KEIGO GOT TO DO WITH IT?!
HIS COMPANY DOES THAT MEAN HE'S THE PRESIDENT? THAT'S GREAT! AND OVERSEAS, TOO.
IT'S A SMALL COMPANY, BUT IT SEEMS THEY'VE REALLY GOTTEN ON TRACK. ISN'T THAT NICE?
HE SAYS THE NEW PLACE HE'S DOING BUSINESS WITH TURNS OUT TO BE GAMOU-SAN'S COMPANY!
WELL, YOU KNOW HOW YOUR FATHER'S IN FRANCE?
APPARENTLY, HE WANTS TO COME BACK TO JAPAN AND WON'T COME OUT OF HIS ROOM.
BUT HIS FATHER HAS THE BUSINESS TO RUN. IT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE
A SHUT-IN...?
KEIGO GAMOU ..
PICKED ON WHEN HE WAS A KID...
...AND NOW, A SHUT-IN? SAD.
SO - HIS FATHER WONDERED IF WE'D BE WILLING TO TAKE CARE OF HIM
DON'T RUN AWAY, GAMOU!

HE CAME TO THIS CITY WHEN HE WAS IN THE FIFTH GRADE...
...AND MOVED AWAY AGAIN BEFORE HE EVEN ENTERED MIDDLE SCHOOL.
HEY, GAMOU -
GO ON, SAY SOMETHING!
TALK, TALK!
YOU TALK FUNNY!
PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE
I DON'T TALK FUNNY.
LISTEN TO THAT! YOU DO, TOO!
SO CREEPY!
BWAHAHAHAHA
GRAB
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING TO KEIGO?!
IT'S A! CHIHIRO - RUN!
CHIHIRO...
C'MON, DON'T CRY.
WIC WIC
BUT I CAN'T
Y'KNOW, YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN TO TALK BACK A LITTLE MORE!
THANK YOU, CHIHIRO.

REALLY FAR AWAY OVERSEAS
IT'S THE CAPITAL OF AUSTRIA
VIENNA?! WHERE'S THAT?!
MY DAD SAYS WE HAVE TO MOVE TO VIENNA BECAUSE OF HIS BUSINESS...
I'LL MISS YOU, CHIHIRO... I DON'T WANT TO GO
KEIGO...
I'LL WRITE... SO DON'T FORGET ME, OKAY...?
I'LL COME BACK... I PROMISE I WILL...
THE SKINNY CRY-BABY KEIGO
"HE WANTS TO COME BACK TO JAPAN..."
...AND OUR CONTACT JUST SORTA DIED OUT...
I'M NOT GOOD AT THAT STUFF
I WAS LAZY AND DIDN'T SEND BACK MANY ANSWERS...
AFTER THAT...
HE DID WRITE ME LIKE HE SAID, BUT...

BUT... ISN'T KEIGO-KUN THE SAME AGE AS CHI?!
I FEEL SORRY FOR HIM! BESIDES, WE HAVE A SPARE ROOM ANYWAY
WHAT?
TAKE CARE OF HIM?! SERIOUSLY?!
"DON'T FORGET ME, OKAY?"
URK... A SHUT-IN, HUH? THAT'S HEAVY...
I FEEL SORTA RESPON-SIBLE..
DOOOM-
WHAT ABOUT YOU, CHIHIRO? YOU DON'T OBJECT, DO YOU?
NO
BY THE WAY, I TOLD FATHER ABOUT YOUR TRAIN INCIDENT
TWO HORMONE-DRIVEN 16-YEAR-OLDS UNDER ONE ROOF WITH ME... IT POSES A SERIOUS DANGER FOR A MAIDEN.
YEAH, I DON'T THINK SO
THINK AGAIN
SLURP
I'LL HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO HIM.
IF HE REALLY DOES COME BACK..
I HOPE HE'S NOT MAD AT ME..
SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WE RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM THE GAMOUS
THANK YOU - PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HIM.

CLEAN-UP OF THE SPARE ROOM FOR KEIGO BEGAN
HERE - I CHANGED IT
WRING OUT THE DIRTY RAGS, WILL YOU?
MAY BE HAVE HELP
AND SO -
CHIHIRO -
CHANGE THE WATER IN THE BUCKET!
HE SOUNDS SO DEPRESSING. AND HE USED TO BE SUCH A SKINNY LITTLE SHRIMP
IF HE'S ANYTHING LIKE CHIHIRO AND STOPPED GROWING ALTOGETHER... UGH, THAT'D BE THE WORST
DON'T SAY "THE WORST"!
SIGHH -
HEY
WHAT DO YOU THINK KEIGO-KUN IS GONNA LOOK LIKE...?
SO HE REACHED HIS MAX HEIGHT BEFORE PUBERTY.?
HE WAS ALWAYS THE TALLEST BOY IN CLASS UP UNTIL FOURTH GRADE
IT'S NOT THAT CHIHIRO STOPPED GROWING - HE GREW TOO FAST

YESTERDAY, WE HAD A PHONE CALL - FROM KEIGO HIMSELF.
I'LL KEEP MY EXPECTATIONS LOW.
OH WELL. KNOWING WHAT THE KID WAS LIKE BACK THEN...
HIS KIND, GENTLE WAY OF SPEAKING HADN'T CHANGED A BIT.
CHIHIRO?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
HIS VOICE WAS LOWER, BUT...
NO... IT COULDN'T BE.
COULD IT BE KEIGO...?!
HE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO GET HERE 'TIL THE DAY AFTER...
HUH?
A TAXI IN FRONT OF OUR HOUSE?
KEIGO WILL SOON BE COMING TO LIVE WITH US.
THANK YOU. COME AGAIN -

THEN WHO'S THIS...?
!
GAH! HOW ANNOYING!
IT'S LIKE EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM IS CHALLENGING ME!
UM...
DO YOU HAVE BUSINESS WITH US?

CHIHIRO?
THIS VOICE...
?!
YOU'RE HERE EARLIER THAN EXP--
S-
>!
I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU AT ALL!
K-K-K-K-KEIGO?!
HUH?!
YOU'RE HUGE! ARE YOU FOR REAL?!

HUH?!
I MISSED YOU...!
WHAAAT?!
SQUEEEEEZE
WHAT?
WHAT?!
CHIHIRO
SNIFFLE
CHIHIRO!
SNIFF
SOB
I... I THOUGHT HE WAS GONNA KISS ME THERE FOR A SEC WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
THERE THERE
SNIFF SNIFF
YOUR BODY MAY HAVE GROWN, BUT STILL THE CRYBABY AS ALWAYS, EH...?
SIGH. WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO WITH YOU?
W... WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?
OH MAN, THAT SURPRISED ME...

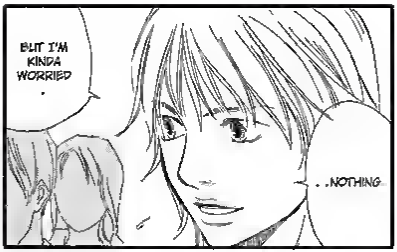
THIS MOVING REUNION SCENE IS OVER!
TWANG
OUCH!
SHUT UP!
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU TWO DOING?
I'M SORRY.
I JUST COULDN'T WAIT ANY LONGER. .
SO I TOOK AN EARLIER FLIGHT
I'M SORRY, I -
YEAH... YEAH, I KNOW - I'M SORRY.
HMM.
YOUR PARENTS WERE ABOUT TO PUT OUT A CALL FOR MISSING PERSONS! WHY DID YOU LEAVE WITHOUT TELLING THEM?
IT'S OKAY - JUST GET ON THE PHONE!
STUPID KIDS, GO WHERE?
I'M SORRY ..
SAYONARA BEBE, A SHOT AT IT. TOOK THEM A WHILE TO NOTICE HE WAS GONE
HE'S MATURED PRETTY GOOD - UNLIKE SOME PEOPLE AROUND HERE I KNOW
WELL, EXCUSE ME!
HUH?

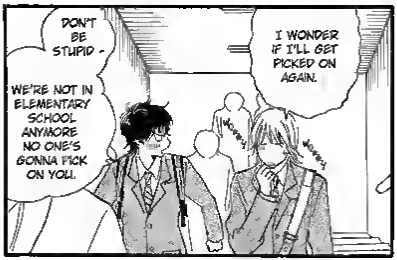
NICE TO HAVE YOU WITH US
I'LL BE IN YOUR CARE FROM NOW ON
SORRY FOR CAUSING SUCH A FUSS ..
ペコリ
BOW
WHY ARE WE BEING SO FORMAL?
OH, AND SO ARE YOU, MRS. SAKURADA - ..
KEIGO-KUN...
OF COURSE !
OH, BIG SISTER MISUZU! YOU'RE LOOKING BEAUTIFUL AS EVER!
KEIGO, HURRY UP, I'LL SHOW YOU TO YOUR ROOM.
YOU LITERALLY CAME WITH ONLY THE CLOTHES ON YOUR BACK. HUH?
YEAH
I CAN JUST BUY EVERYTHING AGAIN OVER HERE.
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
RATTLE
OOH, TATAMI MATS!
SO NOSTALGIC!
THIS IS YOUR ROOM.
IT'S SMALL, BUT...
OH?
I BROUGHT ONLY ONE THING..
AS LONG AS I HAVE IT, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS.

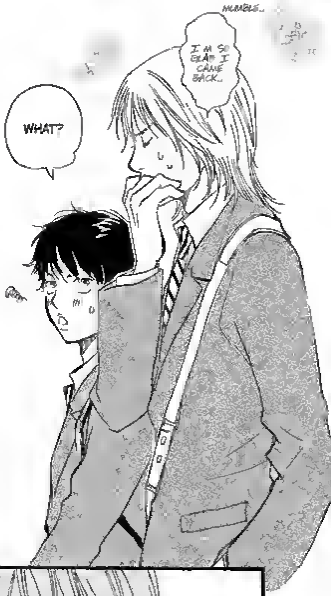
DO YOU PREFER TO SLEEP IN A BED?
A FUTON'S OKAY - I DON'T MIND AT ALL
I WAS JUST THINKING THIS IS LIKE A DREAM...
THERE WAS NEVER A MOMENT I FORGOT YOU, CHIHIRO
...
AWKWARD...
HA HA HA!
I BET YOU WERE SHOCKED THAT I HAVEN'T GROWN, HUH?
NO, NOT AT ALL
I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, CHIHIRO
SUCH A CORNY LINE WITH A FACE LIKE THAT -
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO RESERVED
FROM NOW ON YOU'RE PART OF OUR FAMILY
WHAT IS IT?
HAMATY DON'T LOOK DOWN AT ME

CUT IT OUT! KIMO!!
UM.. WHAT DOES "KIMO!" MEAN AGAIN?
"CREEPY"!
OH NO...
I WAS SUPPOSED TO APOLOGIZE TO HIM...
WHAAAT?!
THAT'S MEAN! I WAS BEING SERIOUS!
THAT MAKES IT EVEN CREEPIER - FOOL!
YOU CALLED ME A FOOL, MEAN!
OH...
IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU!
BWAH BWAH

YOU'RE BOTH SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS NOW
STUDY AND BE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOR!
BOTH ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL WERE CASUAL DRESS
TEE-HEE
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME IN A SCHOOL UNIFORM!
QUIET!
MIND THE GROPING NOW - !
TAKE CARE-
IF HE PASSED HIS ENTRANCE EXAMS LOOKING LIKE THAT, IT SHOULD BE FINE.
IS HIS LONG HAIR OKAY?
SHOULD BE ALRIGHT
I...
YOU MEAN YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GETS GROPED?!
WHAT?! WHY WOULD I DO A THING LIKE THAT?!
STUN!
GROPING...
YOU DO THAT, CHIHIRO?


BUT I'M KINDA WORRIED -
. . .NOTHING


DON'T BE STUPID -
WE'RE NOT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ANYMORE NO ONE'S GONNA PICK ON YOU.
I WONDER IF I'LL GET PICKED ON AGAIN.

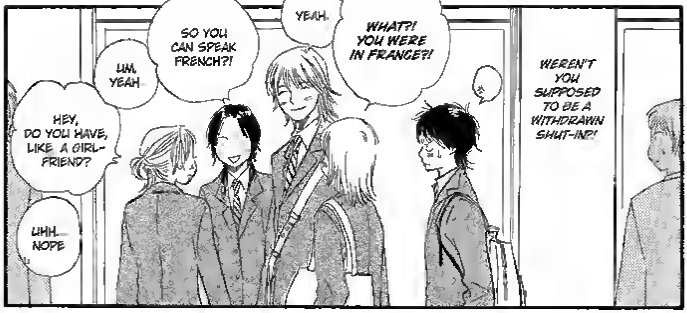

MUMBLE...
I'M SO GLAD I CAME BACK...
WHAT?

YEAH, AND EVEN IF THEY DID -
YOU'D PROTECT ME. RIGHT, CHIHIRO?

THE WAY KEIGO LOOKS NOW, WHAT'S MORE LIKELY TO HAPPEN IS -
PICKED ON? YEAH, RIGHT.

CLASS A? LUCKY - I WANNA BE IN CLASS A, TOO!
YOU ARE IN CLASS A, TOO
WHAT THE FUCK
MURMUR
CLASS A
THIS IS SO NERVE-WRACKING... WHAT CLASS ARE YOU, CHIHIRO?
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
OH, IT'S TRUE!
AMAZING! I MUST'VE USED UP AN ENTIRE LIFETIME'S WORTH OF LUCK!
C'MON, LET'S GO INSIDE CLASS-ROOM A.
I GOT SEPARATED FROM YUKINO
2 - A
YO -
SAKURADA!

HUH?
WHO'S THAT?!
HE'S TOTALLY CRUSHING HIT HARD
OH -
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M GONNA BE IN THE SAME CLASS WITH YOU ALL THREE YEARS NOW...
OHMAN
ALL MORE CLASS CHANGES AFTER SECOND YEAR.
DON'T BE SO COLD.
I LOVE YOU, SAKURADA!
KISS
MURMUR
MY NAME IS KEIGO GAMOU!
OKAY, NEXT!
MURMUR
I'M TAKASHI KIMURA
NEXT?
WHISPER WHISPER
WOW -
YOUR FRIEND'S A BIG HIT!
EVERY GIRL IN CLASS HAS GOT HEARTS FOR EYES!
STRANGE...
THEY'RE JUST BEING FOOLED BY HIS LOOKS.


WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE A WITHDRAWN SHUT-IN?!
WHAT?! YOU WERE IN FRANCE?!
YEAH.
SO YOU CAN SPEAK FRENCH?!
UH, YEAH
HEY, DO YOU HAVE, LIKE A GIRL-FRIEND?
UHH... NOPE

OH -
SAKURA-DA-KUN! IT'S BEEN A WHILE
OH! CHIHIRO!
THIS IS STUPID - I'M GOING HOME
TRDMP TRDMP
UHH, SO YOU DON'T HAVE A GIRL? I'M IN LUCK!
TWINKLE -

I GUESS I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT SEPARATED - I'M IN CLASS C NOW
BOTH CHIE-CHAN AND YUKI ARE IN CLASS A...
HI, YUKINO
YOU GOT A HAIR CUT...
NO, IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.
HEH HEH
DOES IT LOOK FUNNY?

LOOM -
MAYBE I SHOULD GET MY HAIR CUT, TOO...
?!
YOU'RE SO MEAN TO LEAVE ME BEHIND!
SHUT UP!
I HATE BEING A THIRD WHEEL LIKE THAT!
CHIHIRO, ARE YOU DONE WITH YOUR BATH?
THEN TELL KEIGO-KUN TO GO NEXT
OKAY
KEIGO -
KNOCK KNOCK
YOUR TURN FOR A BATH
HEY?
SILENCE
CLATTER
I'M LETTING MYSELF IN!

?!
IS HE GONNA JUMP?!
KEIGO!
HUH?
...
?!
DON'T BE SILLY.
I WAS JUST LOOKING OUTSIDE

I PANICKED ...
I JUST JUMPED TO CONCLUSIONS...
...CUZ, Y'KNOW, YOU WERE A SHUT-IN OVER TH-...
OH!
IT'S OKAY.
IT'S THE TRUTH
DURING THE TIME HE WAS LIVING OVERSEAS...
DIDN'T YOU... HAVE FRIENDS OVER THERE?
YEAH, I DID - BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS
I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
THEN WHY?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

I THINK WHAT I JUST HEARD WAS A PASSIONATE CONFESSION OF HIS LOVE FOR SOMEBODY.
OH, I SEE
YOU JUST THOUGHT "KIMI" IN YOUR HEAD, DIDN'T YOU?
N... NOT REALLY
JUMP!
BECAUSE I COULDN'T BE WITH THE ONE PERSON I WANTED TO BE WITH.
HE SAID IT SO CASUALLY, BUT
TAKE YOUR BATH.
I SEE
IT'S CONVENIENT THAT OUR ROOMS ARE CONNECTED BY THE VERANDA, ISN'T IT?
SO KEIGO'S GOT A LOT ON HIS MIND TOO
I FEEL CONFLICTED
BUT NOW HE'S ALL GROWN UP.
HE USED TO BE SUCH A CRYBABY, ALWAYS HIDING BEHIND MY BACK...

Nnnn...
Lurch...
YAWN
MORNIN'
HURRY UP AND EAT! YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!
YEAH YEAH -
CLINK
HOW ABOUT THIS ONE?
OH, I THINK I LIKE THIS ONE.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
?!
WHAT'S THAT SMELL?!
IT'S PERFUME
PERFUME? FOR A DUDE?
THEY GAVE IT TO ME AT WORK
YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED RIGHT?
BUT KEIGO-KUN IS SO I SAID HE COULD HAVE IT IF THERE'S ONE HE LIKES
SO LADY FIRST THING IN THE MORNING
SIGH
IT'S PERFECTLY NORMAL FOR A GUY THESE DAYS!
SEE HOW HARD IT IS TO HAVE A LITTLE BROTHER WHO'S SO OUT-OF-TOUCH WITH THE TIMES?
JUST HURRY UP AND EAT YOUR BREAKFAST!
WHAT?!

KA-TAK
KA-TAK
YOU GUYS REALLY GET ALONG, DON'T YOU?
YOU AND YOUR SISTER
PSSHHT -
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
HER JOB AS A MODEL IS PERFECT FOR HER.
...CUZ PERSONALITY DOESN'T SHOW UP IN PHOTO-GRAPHS
HUH?
KA-TAK
KA-TAK...
I SMELL SOMETHING
WHAT?
SNIFF
SNIFF
HUH?
A SMELL
OH.
IT MIGHT BE THE PERFUME FROM EARLIER
DOES IT STINK?!!!
NUH-UH
IT'S A NICE SCENT.

LEAN_
THE PERFUME BY ITSELF WAS OVERPOWERING, BUT...
SNIFF
...I GUESS THE SCENT CHANGES WHEN IT MIXES WITH YOUR BODY'S
CH-CH-CH-
CHIHIRO!
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
WHAT?
WHY'RE YOU SO HOT TERUMI?
UM -!
WHA
I FEEL SOMETHING HARD AGAINST ME_

...
...
...
I'M SORRY!
KEIGO'S -
?
IS THIS -
- STATION... FOR THOSE DISEMBARKING, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE NOT LEFT ANY BELONGINGS -
PSSHHT
SNAP
PAPER
DASH
HUH?!
KEIGO?!
THIS ISN'T OUR STOP

WESTERN-STYLE
KEIGO?
YOU IN THERE?
KEIGO!
バタン!!
SLAM!
DON'T CALL ME STUPID!
WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE ANYWAY?!
MUSH
WHY DID YOU GET OFF THE TRAIN TOO?!
YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!
STUPID!
I GOT HARD BECAUSE I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!!
UHOH... THAT WAS -
THAT WAS A REACTION TO YOU LEANING AGAINST ME!

HUH?
WHAT'D YOU SAY?
I LOVE YOU, CHIHIRO!
I TOTALLY LOVE YOU!
EVER SINCE WE WERE KIDS!
I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!
...

C'MON, DON'T MAKE ME HAVE TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS, STUPID CHIHIRO!
I CAN'T GO TO SCHOOL PITCHING A TENT -
I CAN'T HELP IT!
BAM!
NO SMOKING
IS THAT SOMETHING YOU SHOULD SAY FROM A TRAIN STATION BATHROOM STALL?!
BAM!...
DUMMY!
BAM
BAM
THE NEXT TRAIN SHOULD BE IN SOON
I'LL LEAVE ONCE I'VE RELIEVED MYSELF SO YOU GO ON AHEAD
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
...

WHEW -
SPLOOSH -
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
THE TRAIN WILL BE ARRIVING ON TRACK NUMBER 2 -
IT'S PAST NINE...
I'M TOTALLY LATE
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST GO HOME
PRETEND I'M SICK.
DARN -
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THIS.
CHIHIRO IS ST[illegible]NGHT.
BEING TOLD SOMETHING LIKE THAT OUT OF THE BLUE MUST HAVE B -
WHAT TOOK YOU?!

I TOLD YOU...
HNGH.
TO GO ON AHEAD
HOW COULD I, YOU DUMMY?!
TWO TRAINS ALREADY WENT BY...
I
ZZ
HOW COULD I JUST LEAVE AFTER BEING TOLD SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
FOOL.
...

I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN TELL YOU TO STOP LIKING ME.
I SEE.
WELL, I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
SO THE PERSON YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT ON THE VERANDA...
YEAH.
...WAS ME?
NOD
CHIHIRO!
DOES THAT MEAN, IT'S OKAY FOR ME TO BE IN LOVE WITH YOU?
WELL, I SUPPOSE SO.
THE TRAIN IS APPROACHING.
PLEASE REMAIN BEHIND THE WHITE LINE -
HONK -
KEIGO -

...IT'S UP TO YOU WHETHER TO STAY IN LOVE WITH ME OR NOT -
BUT YOU SHOULD PRETTY MUCH CONSIDER IT HOPELESS.
HUH?
THE TRAIN IS DEPARTING -
I'M SORRY, BUT IT'S BEYOND MY COMPREHENSION
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO...?

PART 2

"TODAY, A CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF MINE CONFESSED HIS LOVE TO ME."
- IS THE MAIL WE GOT...
... FROM A LISTENER NAMED "LETTUCE"-SAN OF XXX CITY.
OOOH! A CHILDHOOD FRIEND SUDDENLY BECOMES YOUR LOVER! HOW ROMANTIC!
OH-OH (LAUGH), HERE WE GO AGAIN - IT'S YUKACCHI'S WEAKNESS.
YEAH, BUT WHAT IF -

"I LOVE YOU CHIHIRO!"
WHAT IF THAT CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF YOURS IS THE SAME GENDER?
はぁあ
SIGHHH
あ。
WHAT A LONG DAY.
I'M TIRED...
?!
AND ALL DURING DINNER WE AVOIDED EYE CONTACT...
AT SCHOOL, WE DIDN'T EVEN SPEAK BECAUSE IT WAS SO AWKWARD

LOOOM...
!!!
JUMP!
WHAT THE - ! KEIGO! HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STANDING THERE?!
AAAAHHHH!
FOR AWHILE...
I WAS GOING TO CALL OUT TO YOU...
RATTLE...
ARE YOU TRYING TO GIVE ME A HEART ATTACK?! DUMMY!
...BUT YOU WERE LISTENING TO THE RADIO SHOW ABOUT THE CONFESSION.
AND SIGHING
...WELL, COME IN

SILENCE...
HEY.
WHY DON'T WE JUST FORGET THAT WHOLE INCIDENT... THIS MORNING EVER HAPPENED?
WHAT?!
LIKE I SAID -
THIS IS TOO AWKWARD - SO IF WE JUST TREAT IT LIKE IT NEVER HAPPENED...
...EVERY-THING WILL BE BACK THE WAY IT WAS

I CAN'T DO THAT
I DON'T REGRET HAVING CONFESSED MY FEELINGS TO YOU, CHIHIRO
WHOA LOOKING ME STRAIGHT IN THE EYES, TOO
BUT THAT'S
STILL -
AT SCHOOL, OR DURING DINNER .
IT WAS DEPRESSING HAVING YOU AVERT YOUR EYES FROM ME ALL DAY.
SEE? THAT'S WHY I'M SAYING -
BUT I DON'T WANT TO PRETEND IT NEVER HAPPENED

OTHERWISE, MA AND SIS WILL THINK SOMETHING'S WRONG.
OKAY.
...
ANYWAY, LET'S JUST ACT LIKE WE'VE ALWAYS DONE - NORMALLY.
IT MAY BE HOPELESS, BUT I CAN'T GIVE YOU UP SO EASILY.
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, CHIHIRO - IT'S UP TO ME WHETHER I STAY IN LOVE WITH YOU OR NOT.
CHIHIRO
HM?
WELL, GOOD NIGHT.
YEAH.

DO YOU..
...HATE ME NOW?
NUH-UH (NOPE)

G'NIGHT -
HEY, KEI-
WAIT - IS THAT WHAT YOU CAME OVER HERE FOR..? TO ASK ME -
HE'S GOT A POINT...
IF ANY OTHER GUY BESIDES KEIGO HAD CONFESSED HIS LOVE FOR ME -
I WOULD PROBABLY HAVE STARTED HATING HIM
UMM... GAMOU-KUN?

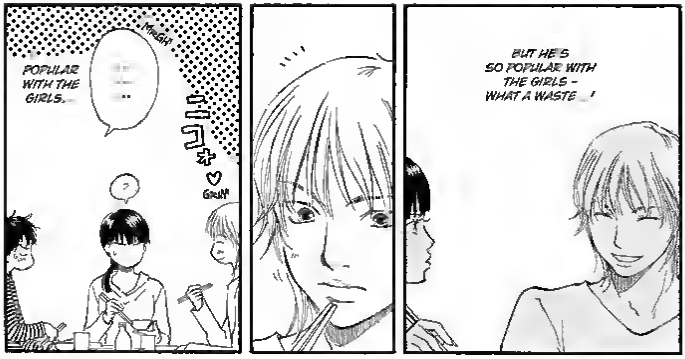
?
YEAH
DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?
SORRY - GO AHEAD WITHOUT ME
OKAY!
I BETCHA IT'S CONFESSION TIME!
OH - SHE'S A GIRL IN CLASS B
HE'S ALREADY TURNED DOWN A COUPLE OF OFFERS ALREADY
WHAT?! THAT DAMNED SAMOU - IT'S UNFORGIVABLE!
YOU LIVE WITH HIM, DON'T YOU, SAKURADA?
HUH? WHY ASK ME?
WHAT'S HIS TYPE?

I NEVER KNEW KEIGO WAS IN LOVE WITH ME...
SO? THAT DOESN'T MEAN I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT HIM!
HALT
HUH?
DUDUN
OOHH!
AIKO YAMADA, EH? NICE!
WOW, F-CUPS!
OR THAT KEIGO LIKED MEN
HUH?
I COULD GO THREE BOWLS OF RICE ON THOSE F-CUPS!
SO IT MEANS... KEIGO IS GAY?
KIPI
KIPI
THREE BOWLS OF RICE?
WHAT'S THAT MEAN?
IT JUST MEANS THAT'S HOW MUCH I "LIKE" HER.
UH.
NAH, THAT COULDN'T BE... BUT...

I GUESS THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE THE NATURAL CONCLUSION
WHAT ABOUT YOU, GAMOU?
ME? GEE, I DON'T KNOW
SINCE KEISO...
GETS AROUSED BY ME
SAKURADA?
?
SIGHHHHH
MUMBLE...
KEIGO SO YOU'RE HOMOSEXUAL...
WHAT?
NO. IT'S ALL RIGHT.

I'M NOT GOING TO BE PREJUDICED...
OR DISCRIMINATE AGAINST YOU FOR IT
UM, ACTUALLY, I LIKE GIRLS. .
I KNOW, I KNOW -
I MEAN EVERYONE'S GOT THEIR OWN LIFE TO LIVE
SO EVEN IF YOU LIKE GIRLS -
HUH?
GIRLS ?!
WHIP
YEAH... IT'S NOT THAT I ESPECIALLY PREFER GUYS...
BUT -?!
I LOVE YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE YOU, CHIHIRO.
IT JUST DOESN'T MATTER TO ME THAT YOU'RE A BOY.
THEN -
...ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FIND A GIRL YOU LIKE BETTER THAN ME, DON'T YOU?
...IN THEORY, YEAH
BUT...

IDIOT!
I COULD GO THREE BOWLS OF RICE ON YOU, CHIHIRO, SO -
HUH?! IT MEANS "I REALLY LIKE SOMEONE, RIGHT?"
THAT'S THE WRONG USAGE!
I'M AN IDIOT?! BUT WHY?!
DOOOM!
AT LEAST I FEEL A BIT RELIEVED NOW.
OH WELL -
DINNER'S READY!


...MUGH...
POPULAR WITH THE GIRLS...
GRUM
BUT HE'S SO POPULAR WITH THE GIRLS - WHAT A WASTE...!

HUH?
TWUMP
"TRY"..?
TWUMP
TWUMP
LIKE I SAID - THE NEXT TIME A GIRL CONFESSES TO YOU, WHY DON'T YOU TRY GOING OUT WITH HER?
BUT THAT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR TO THE GIRL...
SO WHAT? YOU'RE POPULAR.
MUGH
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING...? A GIRL IS NOT AN OBJECT, YOU KNOW

I KNOW THAT!
IT'S HOPELESS
BUT YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T DISCRIMINATE EVEN IF I WAS GAY...
I WANT TO GO OUT WITH A GIRL!
GRRR!
TOK TOK
DON'T PULL ON MY SHIRT!
...CHIHIRO...
I... JUST THOUGHT THINGS'D BE BETTER FOR YOU THAT WAY.
...BETTER THAN WASTING YOUR TIME ON A LOVE YOU KNOW IS HOPELESS
...IS IT REALLY HOPELESS?

COULD IT BE...
THAT THERE'S A GIRL YOU LIKE ALREADY..?
!
I SEE...

CREAK
GOOD NIGHT..
CLUNK-KER
THUMP
WHAT'S THE DEAL...?
CLAK
WHY DOES HE HAVE TO LOOK SO HURT..!?
FUCK

CHATTER
...!
YUKI!
CHATTER
2-A
HUH? CHIE-CHAN? ISN'T THIS YOUR SEAT?
MORNING!
HEY, SHIZUKO!
WHAT'S UP?
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SPEAK TO HER AT ALL SINCE WE CHANGED CLASSES.
YUKINO .
OH! YOU'RE SUCH A FAINT-HEARTED KITTY!
CHATTER
OH, UM... DID I... FORGET MY PHYSICS TEXTBOOK HERE?
AND? WHAT'S UP?
WE CHANGED SEATS IN HOMEROOM YESTERDAY.
CHATTER
!

SHOULD I CONFESS MY FEELINGS TO HE...?
I SUPPOSE THAT WOULD BE BEST...
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE YUKINO HAS GOT HER EYES ON ANYONE SPECIAL YET...
BUT... I'M SCARED OF BEING TURNED DOWN
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED -
KEIGO'S PRETTY BRAVE
WELL, HE WAS SORTA FORCED BY GIRLING FANCIES BUT
HE EVEN SAYS I'M THE WHOLE REASON HE CAME BACK TO JAPAN...

WOULD I BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...?
WONDER WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT?
NYAH!
キーン
DING
コーン
DONG
CHATTER
CHATTER
OH!

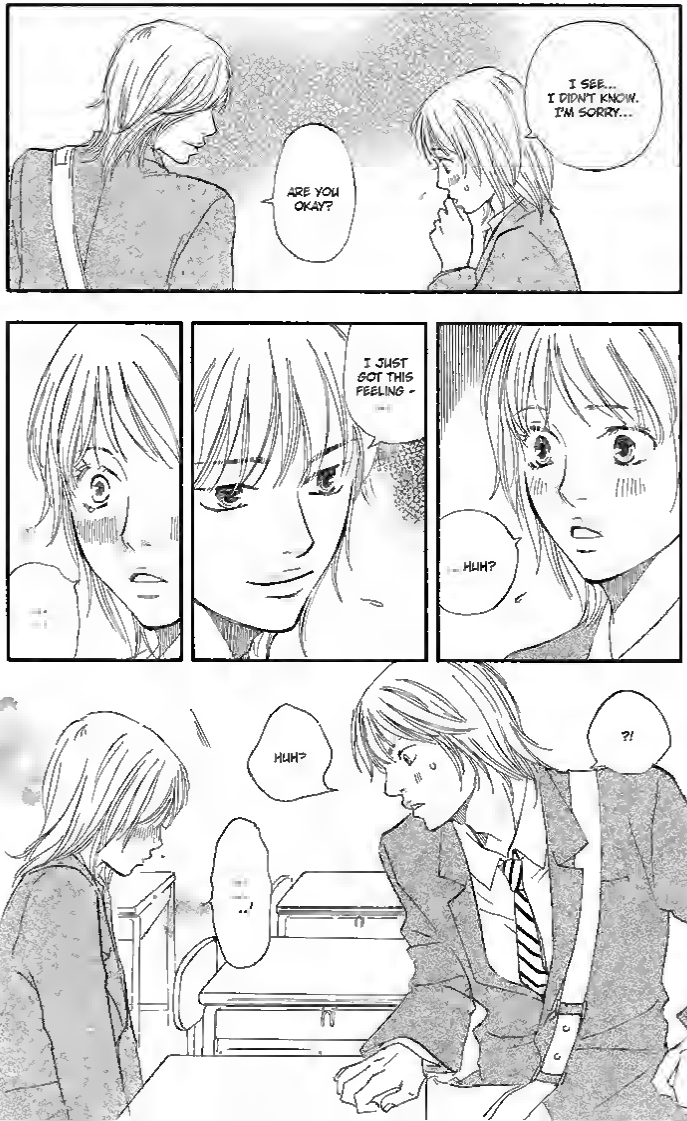
DARN! I FORGOT MY PASS HOLDER IN MY DESK!
WHAT?
AAH!
DASH
IT'S NOT HERE!
I'LL HURRY AND GO GET IT - SO WAIT FOR ME, OKAY?
COME BACK IN TEN SECONDS!
WHAT? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THREE MINUTES! OKAY?
PATTER.
PATTER.

...KEIGO LOVES ME?
I WONDER WHY...
I KNOW IT'S LAME TO ASK FOR A REASON
BUT -
THIS IS A SPECIAL CASE, SINCE WE'RE BOTH MALE
2 - A
I HOPE HE FINDS A GIRL HE LIKES BETTER THAN ME... SOON.

RUNNING FULL-THROTTLE UP THREE FLOORS...
...IS PRETTY TOUGH...
LET'S SEE -
MY PASS HOLDER -
!
...?

SORRY TO DISTURB YOU
WHAT?
HUH?
OH... NO NOT AT ALL
HUH .? SHE S NOT FROM THIS CLASS.
UM, WELL, IT'S JUST -
THAT'S MY DESK
HUH?!
UM...
I LEFT MY PASS HOLDER IN MY DESK AND...
OH, I SEE

YEAH, DURING MORNINGS - BUT WE SWITCH SEATS FROM SECOND PERIOD ON.
OH!
HUMP! BUT -
I THOUGHT THIS WAS CHIE-CHAN'S SEAT?
OH -
I REMEMBER - SHE COMES IN TO VISIT DURING BREAK SOMETIMES...
SO SASAKI-SAN'S SEAT IS ACTUALLY THIS ONE
...
...
KA-
CLATTER
SHE SAID SHE CAN'T SEE THE CHALKBOARD DURING CLASS WHEN I'M SITTING IN FRONT OF HER.


I SEE... I DIDN'T KNOW. I'M SORRY...
ARE YOU OKAY?
I JUST GOT THIS FEELING -
...HUH?
HUH?
...!
?!

HE'S LATE!
HEY, GRANDPA!
IT'S DOUBTFUL, BUT -.
THINK YOU'RE SO COOL CUZ THE GIRLS LIKE YA?
WANT THAT PRETTY FACE MESSED UP?
HUH?!
I'LL FEED IT TO YOU WHEN WE WERE KIDS!
TURN
AHH, FORGET IT!
I'M GOING HOME!
WHERE THE HECK DID HE GET TO?! THAT BIG IDIOT!
HE'S GETTING A BEATING FOR SURE!
FINE! BUT IF NOTHING'S HAPPENED TO YOU, YOU OWE ME!
KEIGO!

SNIFFLE
...I'M FINE. SORRY ABOUT THIS.
SNIFFLE
...
WANT MY HANDKER-CHIEF, TOO?
2 – A
BUT... YOU'RE SOMEHOW DIFFERENT FROM HOW I IMAGINED
NOT ONLY HAVE YOU JUST RETURNED FROM LIVING OVERSEAS, BUT YOU'RE SO HAND-SOME.
I'M NOT SURE I REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHY, THOUGH. .
SNIFF
YOU'RE POPULAR IN ALL THE OTHER CLASSES, TOO, GAMOU-KUN.
HAHAHA!
I'M SORRY -
YOU GAVE ME SUCH A SHOCK, SUDDENLY CRYING LIKE THAT
I'M USUALLY REALLY SHY AROUND PEOPLE I'VE NEVER MET, BUT...
...IT'S REALLY EASY TALKING WITH YOU

WHAT'S HE DOING WITH YUKINO...?
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
. KEIGO -

YUKINO -
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN HER TALKING SO ANIMATEDLY WITH A BOY
THE FIRST TIME EVER - !
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP..

OH NO!
DOOOM
MY PASS HOLDER!
W. WHAT'S WRONG?
MY PASS!
CLATTER
COULD YOU GET IT OUT OF MY DESK FOR ME?!
HE'S GONNA KILL ME. HE'S GONNA KILL ME!
SHARA
SHARA
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
CHIHIRO - !
I'M SORRY!
I'M SO SORRY!

PART 3

HEY, LOOK -
THOSE TWO. THEY'RE TOGETHER A LOT LATELY
YOU MEAN GAMOU AND YUKINO?
THEY TALK TO EACH OTHER DURING BREAKS AND STUFF.
SO GAMOU'S FINALLY FALLEN!
HOW UNEXPECTED!
I'VE NEVER REALLY SEEN YUKINO SPEAKING WITH GUYS BEFORE...
I WONDER WHEN THEY GOT TOGETHER?

NO, NO - IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!
HUH?!
HUH? BUT ALL WE DO IS TALK.
BUT WE?
THE RUMOR'S ALL OVER THE OTHER CLASSES, TOO
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
YEAH, WELL, SEEING YOU TWO FLIRTING IN THE HALL IS ANNOYING!
BUT I TOLD YOU - IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!

MORE RICE, KEIGO-KUN?
OH! NO, THANK YOU.
CHU
CHU
OH! -
PASS ME THE SOY SAUCE
UM... MRS. SAKURADA.
I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD GET A CELL PHONE.
OH?
A CELL PHONE?
TWITCH
IT'D BE CONVENIENT IF I HAD ONE AFTER ALL.
BUT WHEN I ASKED YOU BEFORE, YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T WANT ONE
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, BUT...

IT'S A GIRL - G-I-R-L.
HE'S GOT A GIRLFRIEND!
OH, I GET IT.
?!
NO, NO, THAT'S NOT IT!
YOU MEAN THERE'S ANOTHER REASON?
PLEASE DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, MA'AM!
THEN -
WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING ON, KEIGO?!
SEVERAL DAYS AGO -
I SAW YOU WITH HER IN THE CLASSROOM AFTER SCHOOL -
AND NOW YOU'RE ALWAYS SEEN TOGETHER -

LOOK, LOOK, CHIHIRO!
THE NEXT DAY
I'M HOME
HUH?! KEIGO!
YAAAY!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THEN WE'LL GO TO THE STORE TOMORROW.
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!
I GOT THE EXACT SAME KIND AS YOURS!
OH!
GRAB
WHAT'S WRONG...? PLEASE DON'T BE SO ROUGH WITH IT!
I JUST GOT IT!!
...
PLIK
PLIK
PLIK

I'M HOME -
OH!
YOU GOT YOUR CELL PHONE!
NO RECEIVED ENTRIES
...
YEAH, WELL HE ONLY JUST GOT IT, SO...
SULLEN
YAAAY YOU'RE MY VERY FIRST ADDRESS BOOK ENTRY, MISUZU-SAN!
GLITTER
OKAY, LET ME PUNCH IN MY PHONE NUMBER AND E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR YOU
JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DON'T GIVE 'EM OUT TO JUST ANYBODY - SO BE GRATEFUL!
GLITTER
WHAAAT?
WHAT'S THE POINT, WHEN WE LIVE IN THE SAME HOUSE?!
STUPID!
SHUT UP!
LET'S EXCHANGE E-MAILS TOO OKAY, CHIHIRO?
OF COURSE HE WOULDN'T HAVE YUKINO'S MAIL ADDRESS YET
2-A

HEY ..
I HAVEN'T SEEN GANOU AND YUKINO TOGETHER AT ALL LATELY.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
MAYBE THE RUMORS ARE WRONG
NO -
YEAH.
IT'S JUST THAT THEY DON'T NEED TO TALK IN SCHOOL ANY-MORE BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT CELL PHONES.
I'M SURE SHE'S THE ONE HE S E-MAILING..!

ガララ
RATTLE
KEIGO -
MA'S ASKING IF YOU WANT SOME CAKE.
?!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING ALL SCRUNCHED UP OVER THERE?
NOTHING.
HEH HEH.
OOH, YEAH - I'D LOVE SOME CAKE! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.
SLIP
HE . JUST HID IT FROM ME.
HEY.
WHO ARE YOU ALWAYS E-MAILING?
IT'S NOT ANYBODY IN CLASS, RIGHT?
YOU HAVEN'T GIVEN ANYONE YOUR MAIL ADDRESS
WHO IS IT?
ぱしっ
THWAP
WHAT'S WRONG ? I'M NOT CHEATING ON YOU OR ANYTHING, OKAY?
CHIHIRO?
?
ずるり
LEAN -

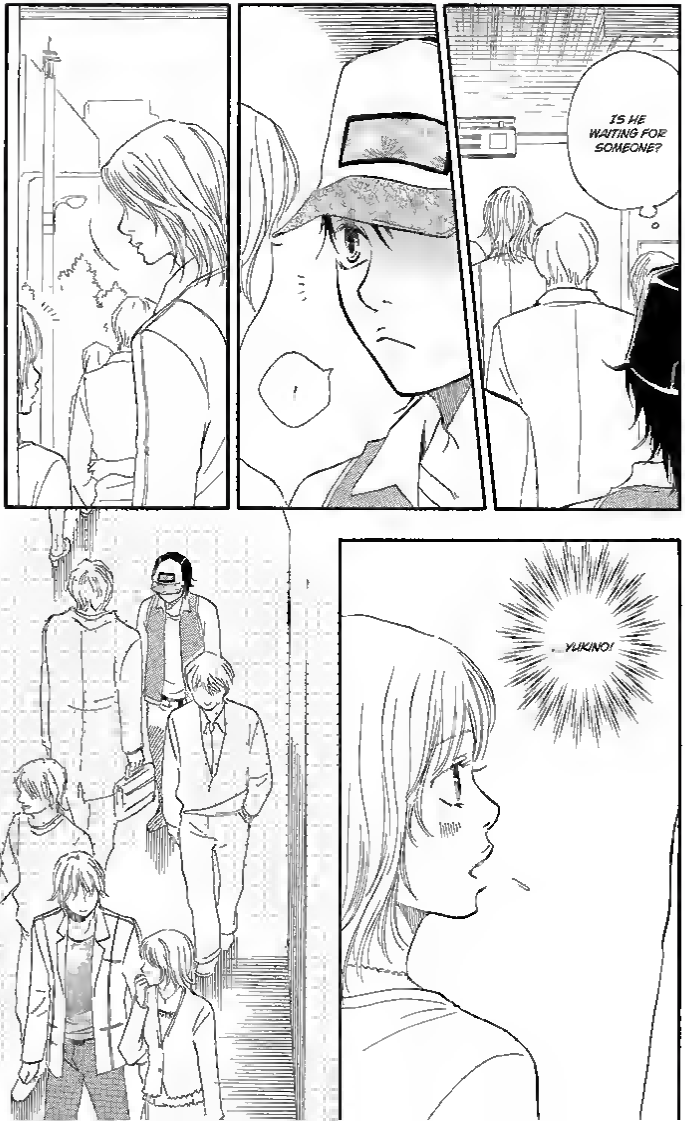
HUH?
AREN'T YOU GOING TO YELL, "STUPID!" AT ME?
EH?
LIKE ALWAYS?
...
LET ME SEE
MUMBLE
HUH..?!
I SAID, LET ME SEE!
?!
WHSH!

SHUT UP!
WAI-...
NO, CHIHIRO!
YOU CAN'T!
OKAY?
IT'S AN INFRINGEMENT ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PRIVACY

SOMEONE ELSE?!!
ARE YOU ANGRY?
GRR...
"SOME-ONE ELSE"
"SOME-ONE ELSE"?!
RRRR...
SWAY...
CH-
CHIHIRO?!
YOU'RE SCARING ME!
WHATEVER!
HE TALKS ABOUT BEING IN LOVE WITH ME, BUT -
WHAT ABOUT THE CAKE? AREN'T YOU GOING TO HAVE ANY, CHIHIRO?
THUMP!
RATTLE
I DON'T WANT ANY!

MRS. SAKURADA -
I'M GOING OUT FOR A BIT.
OKAY, TAKE CARE!
I'LL BE BACK BY DINNER.
IN THE END, HE REALLY ONLY CARES ABOUT HIMSELF!
SLAM!
OH?
KEIGO-KUN WENT OUT?
PROBABLY A DATE WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND.
I KNOW THIS IS UNCOOL, BUT...
WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU TWO...
SIGH -
HEY! I'M ACTUALLY VERY POPULAR! DON'T COMPARE ME TO CHI!
HUH? SPEAKING OF WHICH - WHERE'S CHI?
OH? HE MUST'VE STEPPED OUT

...I JUST HAVE TO KNOW!
IF KEIGO IS GOING TO INSIST ON HIDING IT FROM ME—
I'M GOING TO INSIST ON FINDING OUT!
BUSTLE
STATIONMASTER'S OFFICE
BUSTLE
SELFISHNESS CUTS BOTH WAYS!
KA-KLAK
KA-KLAK
KA-KLAK


IS HE WAITING FOR SOMEONE?
YUKINO!

BUSTLE
BUSTLE
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!

WELCOME HOME. DINNER'S READY, SO CALL DOWN CHIHIRO FOR ME, TOO, WOULD YOU?
OKAY.
KCHAK
I'M BACK -
CHIHIRO -
IT'S DINNERTIME.
KNOCK KNOCK
シーン...
HUSH...
...?
ガラ!!
CLATTER!
I'M COMING IN, CHIHI-...
?!
WEBA!

YOU SCARED ME
...CHIHIRO?
WHERE DID YOU GO TODAY?
HUH...?
JUST... OUT WITH A FRIEND
MASH
KEIGO...
REMEMBER HOW I TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT THERE'S A GIRL I LIKE?
...YEAH
WELL, I'LL TELL YOU WHO IT IS

IT'S SHIZUKO YUKINO IN CLASS C
?!
SAY SOMETHING, KEIGO.
STILL DON'T WANT TO TELL ME ANYTHING?
I'M BEING HONEST WITH YOU.
I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH BEING SILENT!

NOD_
?!
JERK!
I NEVER WANT TO LOOK AT YOU AGAIN!

I'LL EAT LATER!
I DON'T WANT TO EAT WITH KEIGO!
I'M SORRY - WE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN
WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?
CHIHIRO?!
KEIGO-KUN?
THUMP
THUMP
... I GUESS I ANGERED HIM A LITTLE...
OH... IT'S NOTHING.
WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING?
FIGHTING?
OH DEAR. HE REALLY IS STILL SUCH A CHILD!

STUPID KEIGO...!
I HATE THIS I DON'T WANT TO SIT AROUND WORRYING LIKE A WIMP ANYMORE!
SNEAKING AROUND -
WHY DOESN'T HE JUST TELL ME?
UH...
I BET YOU FOUGHT OVER SOMETHING STUPID
SUCH A TYPICAL PAIR, CHILD.
I SWEAR...
IGNORE
HEY, CHIHIRO!
DON'T LEAVE KEIGO-KUN BEHIND!
I'M OUTTA HERE!

I'M GOING TO CONFESS.
...
I'M GOING TO TELL HER I LIKE HER
DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN
I LIKE WHO I LIKE - JUST DO IT!

IT'S OKAY...
SO, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME ABOUT, SAKURADA-KUN?
SORRY FOR DELAYING YOU LIKE THIS ON YOUR WAY HOME, YUKINO
AND UNLIKE KEIGO'S LOVE -
MINE STILL HAS A CHANCE!
I, LIKE YOU...
...YUKINO.

ARE YOU GOING OUT WITH ANYONE?
SO...
DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE ELSE YOU LIKE RIGHT NOW...?
NOD
IT'S JUST RECENTLY, BUT...
...THERE'S SOMEONE I'M ALREADY SEEING... I'M SORRY
THAT'S WHAT GAMOU-KUN WAS GIVING ME ADVICE ABOUT...
IS IT KE!-...
AND IS THAT PERSON -

EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO GET A CELL PHONE... I FEEL SO BADLY ABOUT IT.
THAT'S WHY GAMOU-KUN, HE...
O OH... SO THAT'S HOW IT WAS...
MAKING HIM SPEND MONEY LIKE THAT

...HUH?
ADVICE ?!
THAT'S WHAT GOT ALL THE RUMORS STARTED...
SORRY FOR DRAGGING YOUR FRIEND INTO THINGS, SAKURADA-KUN.

...ABOUT WHO GAMOU-KUN IS IN LOVE WITH?
DO YOU KNOW, SAKURADA-KUN?
HOW?
?!

WHY WAS HE HIDING ALL THIS FROM ME?!
THAT KEIGO -
BUT WHY KEIGO...? COULDN'T YOU DISCUSS IT WITH SASAKI...?

THEN, I GUESS I CAN TELL YOU, SAKURADA-KUN.
BA-THUMP
HOW MUCH HAVE YOU TOLD HER?! DAMMIT, KEIGO -!
Y...
BA-THUMP
YEAH. I DO.
!
WHEW -
BA-THUMP
SAKURADA-KUN..
I'M -
WHAT?!

"I'm JUST LIKE GAMOU-KUN."
カタターン
KA-TA-K
ゴトトーン
KA-TA-K
NEXT STOP - XXXX STATION
PLEASE EXIT ON THE LEFT -
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE

PLEAS
DO NO
LITTER
STATIO
MASTER
OH.

PATTER
PATTER
PATTER
PATTER
無視
KINOMI
!!!
DOOOM!
...

KEIGO
!!!
YES? YES?!
WHAT IS IT, CHIHIRO?!
YUKINO JUST REJECTED ME
...?
SHE SAID YOU WERE GIVING HER ADVICE

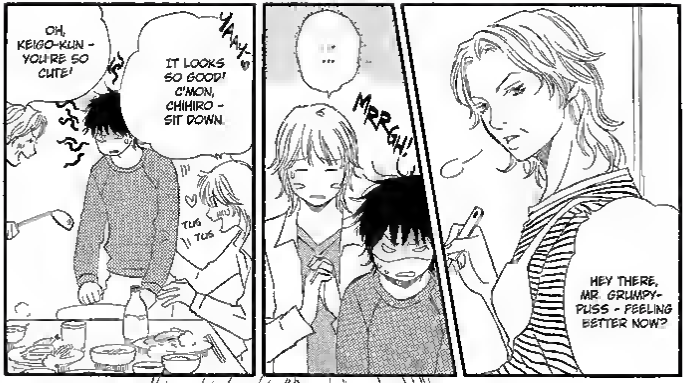
IT WAS YUKINO-SAN'S SECRET
SHE CAME TO ME FOR ADVICE BECAUSE SHE TRUSTED ME
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO BREAK CONFIDENCE - EVEN FOR YOU, CHIHIRO
THAT'S WHY YOU COULDN'T TELL ME
OH
I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO SEE WHAT OUR E-MAILS WERE ABOUT...
...BECAUSE THAT WOULD INFRINGE ON YUKINO-SAN'S PRIVACY.
SO BY "SOMEONE ELSE", HE MEANT - .

YOU SEE, YUKINO-SAN HAD BEEN IN LOVE WITH HER FRIEND, SASAKI-SAN
?!
THAT DAY...?!
THE TIME I LEFT MY PASS HOLDER
WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT IT?
HE MEANT YUKINO
I DON'T KNOW WHY MAYBE SHE JUST INSTINCTIVELY KNEW WE WERE THE SAME
YUKINO-SAN BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT HERSELF
IT MUST BE A WOMAN'S INTUITION
BUT SASAKI-SAN IS A STRAIGHT GIRL SO SHE COULDN'T VERY WELL COME OUT AND TELL HER...
AND SHE'D RESIGNED HERSELF TO GIVING UP
THAT'S WHEN I CAME INTO THE ROOM TO GET MY PASS HOLDER

THE REASON I WENT OUT YESTERDAY...
...WAS BECAUSE YUKINO-SAN HAD MET SOMEONE ONLINE, AND THEY WERE GOING TO MEET
...BUT SHE WAS NERVOUS ABOUT IT, AND ASKED IF I WOULD COME ALONG WITH HER
MET SOMEONE ONLINE. YOU MEAN ANOTHER GIRL?
...YEAH
SHE WAS A COLLEGE STUDENT, WHO SEEMED VERY REFINED AND RELIABLE
..
I SEE
I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU
...THAT YOU WERE IN LOVE WITH YUKINO-SAN.
EVEN MORE SO AFTER YOU TOLD ME.

I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO GET HURT
...KEIGO...
YOU FOOL...
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING LIKE THAT FOR?

!!!
Y... YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M SORRY!
WAH!
I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE CRYING!
NOT ONLY WAS I REJECTED, BUT FOR ANOTHER WOMAN...
I'M A FOOL...
WHY, SHOULD KEIGO HAVE TO APOLOGIZE...?
DINNER'S READY ~ !


OH, KEIGO-KUN - YOU'RE SO CUTE!
IT LOOKS SO GOOD! C'MON, CHIHIRO - SIT DOWN.
YAWN
TUG TUG
...
MRRGH!
HEY THERE, MR GRUMPY-PUSS - FEELING BETTER NOW?

I WAS THE ONE WHO MISUNDERSTOOD AND THREW A TANTRUM...
IN THE END, KEIGO DID NOTHING WRONG.

...TAKING IT ALL OUT ON KEIGO...

HOW COULD ANYONE LOVE SOMEONE LIKE ME?
...I'M THE LOWEST
♪

FROM: CHIHIRO
I WAS A JERK SORRY.
...!!
KEIGO?!
THAT WAS FAST!
PLK PLK
MESSAGES
1 NEW MAIL
?!

FROM: KEIGO
I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, CHIHIRO - EVEN THAT SIDE OF YOU.
!!!
WHAT THE HECK?!
SO CORNY!
NO WAY...
SO CORNY..
HAHA...
AND CREEPY.

PART 4

SEVERAL DAYS HAVE PASSED SINCE I GOT REJECTED BY YUKINO
キーン コーン
DING - DONG -
SAKURADA-KUN!
MORNING!
YUKINO ..! HI
POP
STRANGELY, I SPEAK WITH HER MORE NOW THAT SHE'S REJECTED ME
HE WENT TO TAKE A LEAK
UH, YEAH HE JUST, UH -
HEY, UNUSUAL - ARE YOU ALONE?
HERE'S OHNO-KUN?
WHISPER
...
...
SO ARE THINGS WORKING OUT WITH YOUR NEW... FRIEND?
!!!

YEAH
HEHE!
AND...
YUKINO'S BECOME MUCH MORE OUTGOING
EEK?! OH, SAMURAI-KUN! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
IT'S SO EMBARRASSING!
NO
NO
SQUEEZE
OH!
THANKS...
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT -
I GOT MY HEART BROKEN, RIGHT?
RUSTLE
AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT YUKINO CHOSE ANOTHER WOMAN OVER ME!
IT SHOULD BE A DOUBLE SHOCK, RIGHT?
...BUT FOR SOME REASON, I FEEL STRANGELY OKAY

AND...
IT'S PROBABLY ALL THANKS TO YOU, KEIGO
...
GO ON!
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
HAVE SOME CHIPS, TOO!
I BROUGHT THEM ALL THE WAY UP HERE FOR US
MUNCH
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE A FEVER OR SOMETHING...
WHAT?! WHY?!
DON'T BE SO RUDE!
YOU'RE BEING UNUSUALLY STRAIGHT-FORWARD...
THWAP
?!
WHAT...?

YUKINO... SHE'S BECOME MUCH MORE OUTGOING LATELY...
AND SHE'S GLOWING.
I...
I NEVER EVEN THOUGHT TWO WOMEN COULD FALL IN LOVE WITH EACH OTHER...
...LET ALONE TWO GUYS...
BUT...
I GUESS LOVE CHANGES YOU, EVEN WHEN IT'S BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE OF THE SAME GENDER
...YOU THINK SO?
HMMMMM
HUH?!
WHAT IS IT?
CRUNCH
STARE

IT CHEERS ME UP, EVEN WHEN I'M DEPRESSED.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH IT HELPS ME TO SEE YOU ALWAYS SMILING LIKE THAT.
HA HA
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
CHIHIRO.

THEN WON'T YOU SERIOUSLY CONSIDER A RELATIONSHIP WITH ME?
HUH?
UH, WELL, THAT'S A TOTALLY DIFFERENT STORY, DON'T YOU THINK?!
UHK
...NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, ISN'T THIS A DANGEROUS SITUATION?!
...!
BA-THUMP
WAIT A MINUTE... HERE I AM, CASUALLY SITTING IN KEIGO'S ZOOM WITH HIM, BUT
HUSH...
JUMP

I...
I GUESS I'LL BE GOING BACK TO MY ROOM...
GAH! MY VOICE CRACKED!
SO UNCOOL!
JUST BECAUSE I LOVE YOU DOESN'T MEAN I'M GOING TO JUMP YOU SUDDENLY.
HEY, CHIHIRO - DO YOU HAVE PLANS FOR TOMORROW'S DAY OFF?
HUH?!
NO, NOT PARTICULARLY.
HUH?!
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PLANS, RIGHT? LET'S DO IT!
THEN LET'S GO OUT!

WH...
WHAT'S THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN!?
HUH?!
OKAY, IT'S DECIDED!
YAWWN
MORNING
SO UNCOUTH... A GIRL YOUR AGE..
IT'S A NICE DAY TODAY. AREN'T YOU GOING OUT, MISUZU?
CALLING
WHY? DID CHI AND KEIGO GO SOMEWHERE?
EH?!
THEY SAID THE TWO OF THEM WERE GOING OUT TO HAVE FUN
TWO GUYS?! HOW PATHETIC!
ARE YOU ONE TO TALK?

I CHANGED MY MIND, I'M TOO SLEEPY!
I'M GOING HOME!
OH COME ON, CHIHIRO! THE STATION'S RIGHT THERE!
I'M GOING HOME.
GRAB
SCREW YOU!
YOU FORCED ME TO COME ALONG!
KEEP WALKING!
QUIT COMPLAINING!

NO WAY! NOT WHEN WE'RE FINALLY ON A DATE!
BUT, JUST YOU AND ME...?
COULDN'T WE AT LEAST INVITE TAKAHARA AND MAKE IT A GROUP THING...?
I'M OUT WITH YOU, CHIHIRO - SO FOR ME...
THIS IS A DATE.
TEE-HEE!
WHAT?!
WAIT!
HUH?!
THIS IS STUPID!
CHIHIRO!
I'M GOING HOME!

SNIFFLE
"CHIHIRO."
OH -
NOT GOOD
UHGH.
YOU REALLY HATE IT THAT MUCH...?
URK...

I'VE ALWAYS HAD A WEAK SPOT FOR KEIGO'S WORRIED LOOK.
LET'S GO WE'LL MISS THE TRAIN

HMM.
KA-TAK
SINCE I'M THE ONE WHO INVITED YOU, I'LL TREAT.
WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO, CHIHIRO?
KA-TAK
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU AND I HAVE GONE OUT ALONE TOGETHER LIKE THIS, ISN'T IT?
YEAH.
HUHK -
PO
PEEP -
HUH. ME?
I...
WHY? DON'T YOU HAVE ANYWHERE YOU WANT TO GO?
AS LONG AS I CAN BE WITH YOU, ANYWHERE IS FINE WITH ME.
YOU DECIDE, CHIHIRO.

KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
...THEN WE COULD'VE JUST STAYED AT HOME
NO, NOT THAT!
ZING!
YOU WANT TO SEE THIS?!
WHAA-T?!
THIS
YEAH, THIS HORROR FILM - IT'S A FOREIGN RE-MAKE OF THE JAPANESE VERSION
Bustle
Bustle
Bustle
CAN'T WE SEE THIS ONE INSTEAD?
SCARED
deeply hesitant
THE STORY OF KOZAKURA
NOW SHOWING
"YOU DECIDE, CHIHIRO"
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID --
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SEE THIS ONE
YOUR TREAT, RIGHT?
I MEAN!

SELF-ENCOURAGEMENT IN SESSION
IF THERE'S A SCARY SCENE...
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS CLOSE MY EYES!
IT'S OKAY
IT'S JUST A MADE UP STORY
HE PROBABLY HAS A GIRLFRIEND ALREADY
WHY DON'T YOU GO TALK TO HIM?
HEY, LOOK -
THAT GUY STANDING OVER THERE... HE'S CUTE!
OOH, YOU'RE RIGHT!
HURRY OVER HERE!
NOD

TO ME, KEIGO IS "A CHILDHOOD FRIEND."

CHIHIRO YOU FRIGHTENED (LAUGH)
WHAT'D YOU SAY?
NOT "A LOVER"
WOW! REALLY?
BUT KEEP IT UNDER 1,000 YEN.
THAT'S RIGHT "A FRIEND"
DINNER'S ON ME.
HERE -
SAY "AHHH"
KEIGO!

HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU THINKING?
IS IT GOOD?
MMM SOOO GOOD
NO, NOTHING
I WASN'T FEELING JEALOUS OR ANYTHING! I WASN'T THINKING "I'D LIKE CHICHOO TO FEED ME LIKE THAT," OR WISHING I COULD SAY "AHH." OR ANYTHING AT ALL!
BUT IF -
IT WAS FUN TODAY, WASN'T IT?
THE MOVIE WAS PRETTY GOOD, TOO.
YOU HAD YOUR EYES CLOSED THROUGH MOST OF IT!
NO - THE FACT IS THAT I'M A BOY.
IT'S POINTLESS TO THINK ABOUT.
IF I HAD BEEN A GIRL

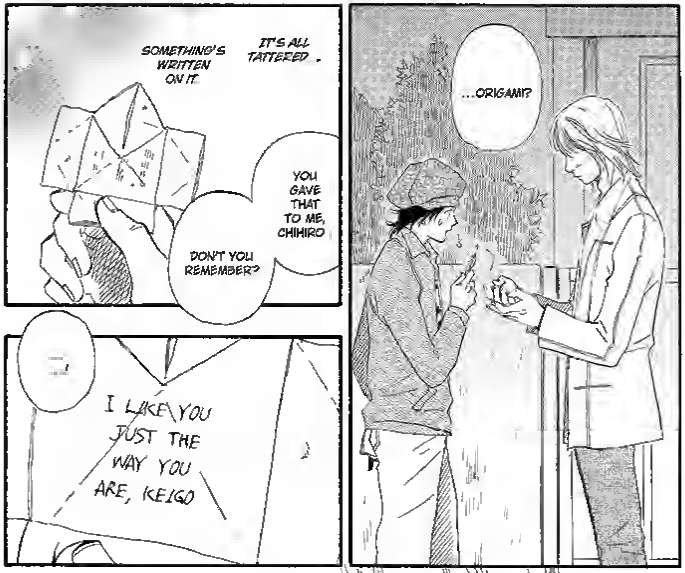
BUT I WAS REALLY HAPPY TODAY
OKAY, OKAY
HOW NICE FOR YOU
WILL YOU GO OUT ON A DATE WITH ME AGAIN SOMETIME?
OKAY!
"TO HAVE FUN", YEAH!
SIGH
I'M SO OBVIOUSLY COLD-SHOULDERING YOU BUT YOU JUST KEEP TRYING... YOU MUST BE A MASOCHIST.

HUH?
"I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE."
...YOU SAY THAT A LOT, DON'T YOU?
I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, CHIHIRO - EVEN THE SADISTIC SIDE OF YOU
HE ALWAYS...
"I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, CHIHIRO."
...TELLS ME THAT WITH SUCH GOOD TIMING...
I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, CHIHIRO - EVEN THAT SIDE OF YOU
HA, HA!
CREEPY, DON'T YA THINK?
. I OFTEN FIND MYSELF REASSURED BY IT.

KEIGO?
?
NO WONDER IT'S CHEESY
COMING FROM YOU, I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED...
OH, WELL...

...CHIHIRO -
YOU DON'T REMEMBER, DO YOU?

WHAT...?!
REMEMBER WHAT?!
RUMMAGE
CRINKLE
?!
WHAT'S THAT...?


SOMETHING'S WRITTEN ON IT
IT'S ALL TATTERED.
YOU GAVE THAT TO ME, CHIHIRO
DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
...ORIGAMI?
I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, KEIGO

THIS...
...IS MY HANDWRITING?

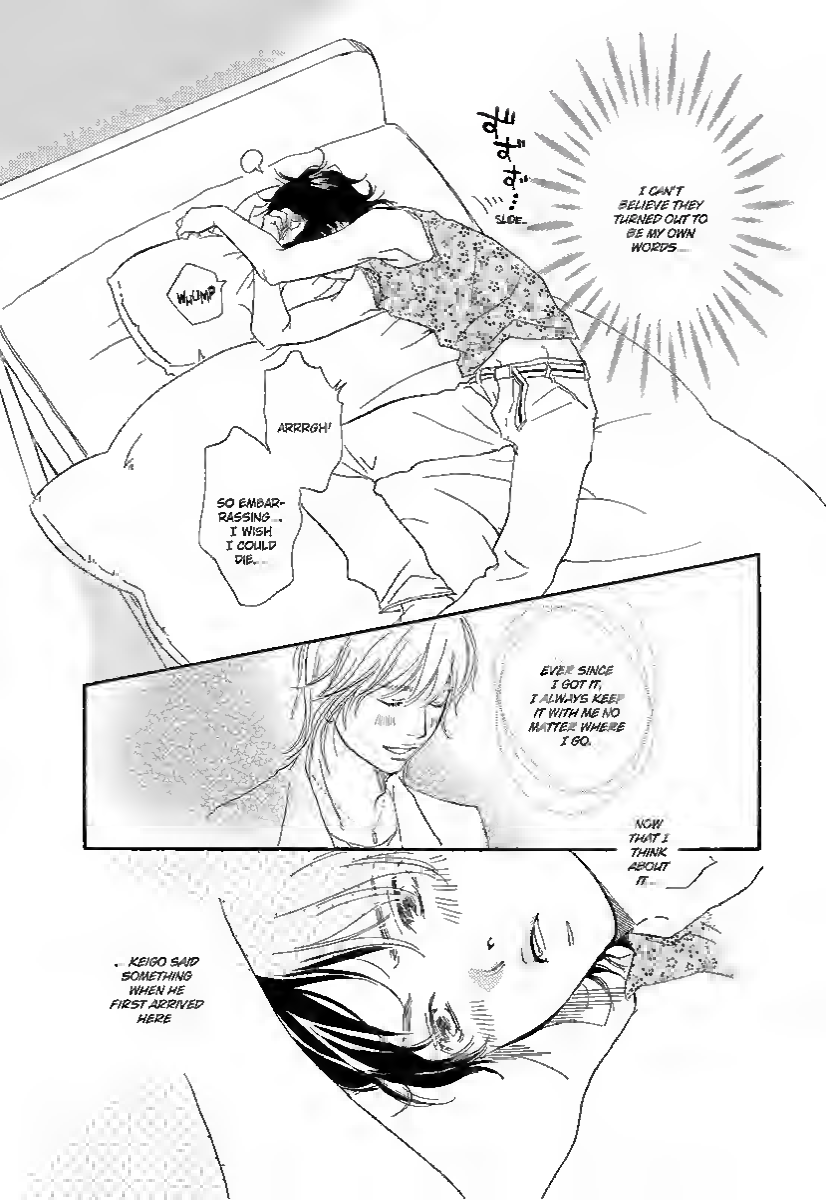
IMMEDIATELY AFTER KEIGO MOVED AWAY OVERSEAS, I RECEIVED A LETTER.
JAPAN
DEAR CHIHIRO -
HOW ARE YOU? I MISS YOU.
I WISH I COULD SEE YOU, CHIHIRO.
I ONLY JUST GOT HERE, BUT I ALREADY WANT TO COME BACK TO JAPAN.
I'M SUCH A CRYBABY. I BET YOU MUST HATE ME.
THAT'S RIGHT.

YEAH
IT WAS THE FIRST LETTER YOU EVER WROTE TO ME
I REMEMBER NOW...
I SENT YOU A REPLY.
I THINK
EVER SINCE I GOT IT, I ALWAYS KEEP IT WITH ME NO MATTER WHERE I GO.
I WAS SO HAPPY...
THIS LETTER OF YOURS -
I LIKE YOU BUT THE WAY YOU ARE KEITA
THIS ORIGAMI AND THE WORDS WRITTEN ON IT ARE MY TREASURE

WHAAAA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ALL OF A SUDDEN, CHIHIRO?!
YOU MADE ME CRUSH IT!
SHUT UP!
THROW THAT THING AWAY!
CRUSH
WHOA?!
WHISH!
SWIPE
URRRRGH
NO WAY! I TOLD YOU - IT'S MY TREASURE!
WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING?
AWW, NO FAIR!
IT'S AN EMBARRASSING PART OF MY PAST!
UMK!
IT'S NOT EMBARRASSING

CHIHIRO
!!!
HUH
COMPRO MISUNO SITIDA TION

"I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE, KEIGO."

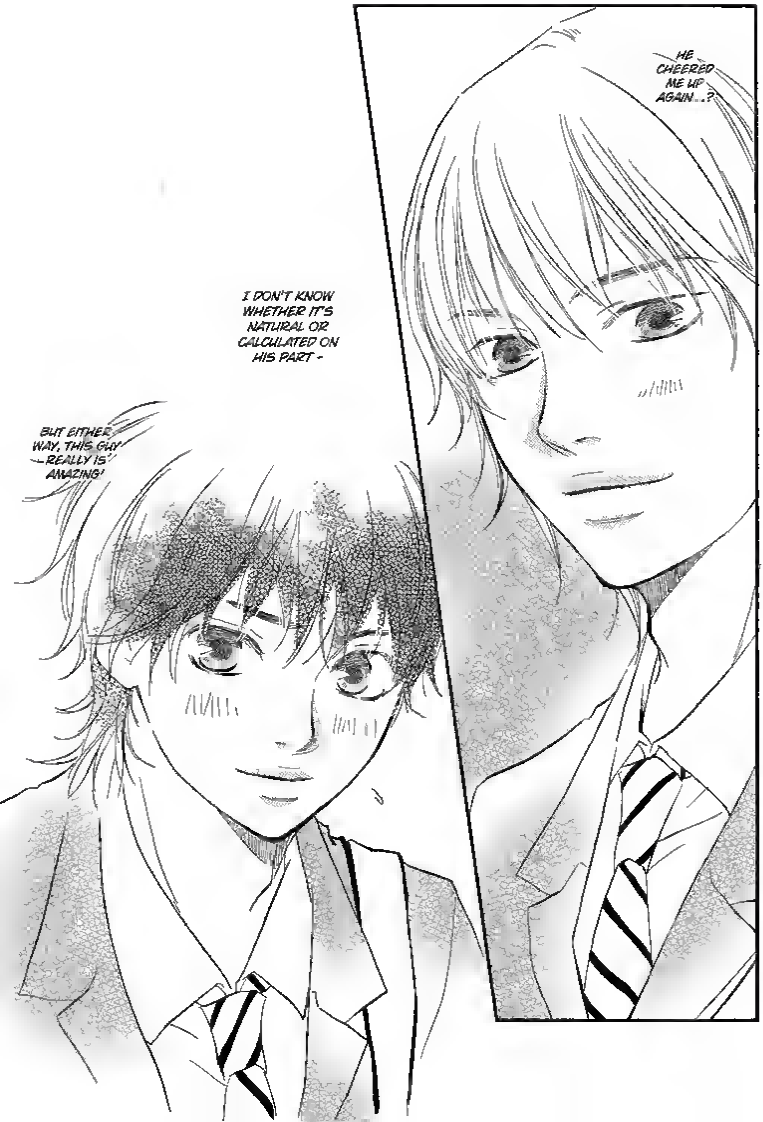

I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY TURNED OUT TO BE MY OWN WORDS...
SLIDE...
WHUMP
ARRRGH!
SO EMBARRASSING... I WISH I COULD DIE...
EVER SINCE I GOT IT, I ALWAYS KEEP IT WITH ME NO MATTER WHERE I GO.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...
...KEIGO SAID SOMETHING WHEN HE FIRST ARRIVED HERE

I BROUGHT ONLY ONE THING...
AS LONG AS I HAVE IT, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS.
YOU LITERALLY CAME WITH ONLY THE CLOTHES ON YOUR BACK, HUH?
YEAH
I CAN JUST BUY EVERYTHING AGAIN OVER HERE.
IT'S MY TREASURE
I WONDER WHEN HE FIRST STARTED FEELING THAT WAY ABOUT ME...
SURELY IT CAN'T BE FROM FIFTH GRADE...

I CAN'T LOOK HIM IN THE FACE...
I FEEL LIKE HE'S BLACK-MAILING ME...
URGH...
GOOD MORNING CHIHIRO!
HEY...
UWAAA...
WE'RE GOING!
OKAY, TAKE CARE!
THUMP...

ARE YOU MAD?
NO...
CHIHIRO?
...
...
...
ARE YOU ANGRY ABOUT YESTERDAY?
...
BLUSH
DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?!
COME ON -
BUT THE WAY YOU SAID "NO," IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE MAD!
LOOK AT ME!
WORRY
WORRY
WORRY
WORRY
YOU'RE SO CUTE...
...
Y.

SHUT UP!
DON'T CALL A GUY "CUTE"!
I'M SORRY...
YOU'RE MEAN CHIHIRO! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO KICK ME IN THE SHIN!
IT DIDN'T HURT ME IN A SOFT
... HUH?
I CAN LOOK HIM NORMALLY IN THE FACE NOW.


HE CHEERED ME UP AGAIN...?
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT'S NATURAL OR CALCULATED ON HIS PART -
BUT EITHER WAY, THIS GUY --REALLY IS-- AMAZING!

CHATTER
CHATTER
SERIOUSLY -
IF ONLY I HAD BEEN A GIRL...
OR KEIGO HAD BEEN A GIRL...
CHATTER
CLINK

HIYA, SAKURADA, GANOU!
GOOD MORNING, OHSAKI
YO
CLUNK
SA-...
SAKURADA-SAN -
HUH?
GOOD MORNING!

M-..
MY NAME IS MIKI KADOKURA, FROM FIRST YEAR, CLASS A!
I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU, IF IT'S OKAY!
O..
OKAY...

PART 5

MORNIN' TAKAHARA!
YO, HEY, WHERE'S SAKURADA?
HE HE HE ~
... :
WELL, Y'SEE, IT'S LIKE THIS RIGHT, GAMOU?
HE WAS JUST CALLED ASIDE BY THIS GIRL FROM FIRST YEAR
HER FACE WAS TOTALLY BLUSHING, AND SHE SAYS, "I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH YOU, SAKURADA-SAN!"
?!!
SOUNDS LIKE A "CONFESSION OF LOVE" TIME!
!!!
I'M 99% SURE OF IT
YO
GOOD MORNING, GAMOU-KUN
DAMN HIM

!!!
SAKURADA, YOU LUCKY DOG!
AGHHH!
CONGRATS, SAKURADA!
YOU TRAITOR!
OHGAK!! YOU'VE GOT A BIG MOUTH!
NOW, NOW! SO HOW'D IT GO? HUH? HUH?
HUH? WHAT'S UP WITH HIM?
SHE TOLD YOU SHE LIKES YOU, RIGHT?
CONFESS!
GLANCE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!
I DIDN'T GIVE HER A DEFINITE ANSWER.
SERIOUSLY?!
HMMM
WHAT A WASTE - SHE WAS A HOTTIE!
YOU THOUGHT SO, TOO, DIDN'T YOU, GAMOU?
. YEAH, SHE WAS
ど?!
WHAT?
IF A GIRL LIKE THAT WANTS TO GO OUT WITH YOU STRAIGHT OFF THE BAT -
WHY NOT TRY STARTING OUT AS FRIENDS?
YEAH, YEAH! I MEAN, SHE APPROACHED YOU FIRST!

AND THEN ONE DAY...
...THE FRIENDSHIP SUDDENLY BLOSSOMS INTO LOVE. IT HAPPENS!
FLICK
...!
OH GOOD ONE!
HE, HE!
I THINK?
キーン
DING -
コォーン
DONG -
ザワ ザワ
ザワ

STUPID!
IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY, SAY IT!
THE ATMOSPHERE'S BEEN SO HEAVY SINCE THIS MORNING!

WAIT!
HALT!
DAMMIT!

WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO TELL HER?
I-
I DON'T KNOW...
CHIHIRO...
DO YOU LIKE THAT GIRL?
?!
I JUST MET HER FOR THE FIRST TIME TODAY!
HOW COULD I-..?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE BLUSHING.
IT'S NATURAL TO BLUSH WHEN SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY LIKE YOU, ISN'T IT?!

WERE YOU BLUSHING WHEN I SAID IT ..?
DON'T BE STUPID !!!
WHAT ARE YOU ASKING THAT FOR?
TURN
IN THE TRAIN STATION RESTROOM
W WHEN DID YOU FIRST START THINKING ABOUT ME IN THAT WAY?
HEY -

... DOES IT INTEREST YOU?
WELL, SURE...
HEY... IT CAN'T BE FROM WAY BACK WHEN WE WERE LITTLE KIDS, CAN IT?
BA-THUMP
BA THUMP
OF COURSE NOT...
WHY?
IF I TOLD YOU EXACTLY WHEN I STARTED LIKING YOU, WOULD YOU SERIOUSLY CONSIDER GOING OUT WITH ME?
NO, THAT'S NOT WHY I...
THWAP!

...KEISO?
.....
HE'S SMILING ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT...HUH?
YEAH, I DIDN'T THINK SO..

APRIL 19TH (FRIDAY) WITH KEIGO-KUN
APRIL, IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE
IT'S TRUE... THAT HE WAS ALWAYS REALLY FOND OF ME...
FLIP
THAT MUST MEAN -
IT STARTED WHEN KEIGO MOVED OVERSEAS AND WE WERE SEPARATED...?
BUT THE KEIGO I KNEW BACK THEN, AT LEAST, WAS JUST "A FRIEND".
HE EVEN SAID SO HIMSELF.

I DON'T GET IT
CAN YOU REALLY "FALL IN LOVE" WITH SOMEONE WHO'S NOT EVEN THERE?
AND WITH ANOTHER BOY, NO LESS ?
GULP
"IF YOU WANT, PLEASE CONTACT ME I'LL BE WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU."
"UM... THIS IS MY CELL PHONE NUMBER AND E-MAIL ADDRESS."

I DO REMEMBER SHE WAS CUTE, BUT
AT THE TIME...
UGH... I CAN ONLY VAGUELY REMEMBER HER FACE
CRUMPLE
1-A MIKI KADOKURA CELL PHONE NO. 090 XXXX XXXX
E-MAIL ADDRESS
I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOUR CALL. MIKI
...
...I WAS MORE CONCERNED WITH THE LOOK ON KEIGO'S FACE
GO ON, SAKURADA! GANGU AND I WILL GO ON AHEAD
HUH. .?
CHUNK
O... OKAY
...?!
AN EXPRESSION I...
THAT SEEMED A LITTLE ANGRY...

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LOOK LIKE THAT...
Uhmm...
UGH...
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

4-ON-4?!
OHH!
A G-
GROUP DATE?!
2-A
WE'LL GO OR DIE TRYING!
SHE SAID SHE'D BRING THREE OF HER FRIENDS ALONG, TOO - FOR THE HOLIDAY TOMORROW.
I E-MAILED HER LAST NIGHT SUGGESTING IT'D BE MORE FUN TO GO OUT AS A GROUP.
YEAH, JUST AS FRIENDS TO START OUT WITH.
GOOD MAN, SAKURADA! YOU'RE THE BESTEST FRIEND EVER! A GOD!

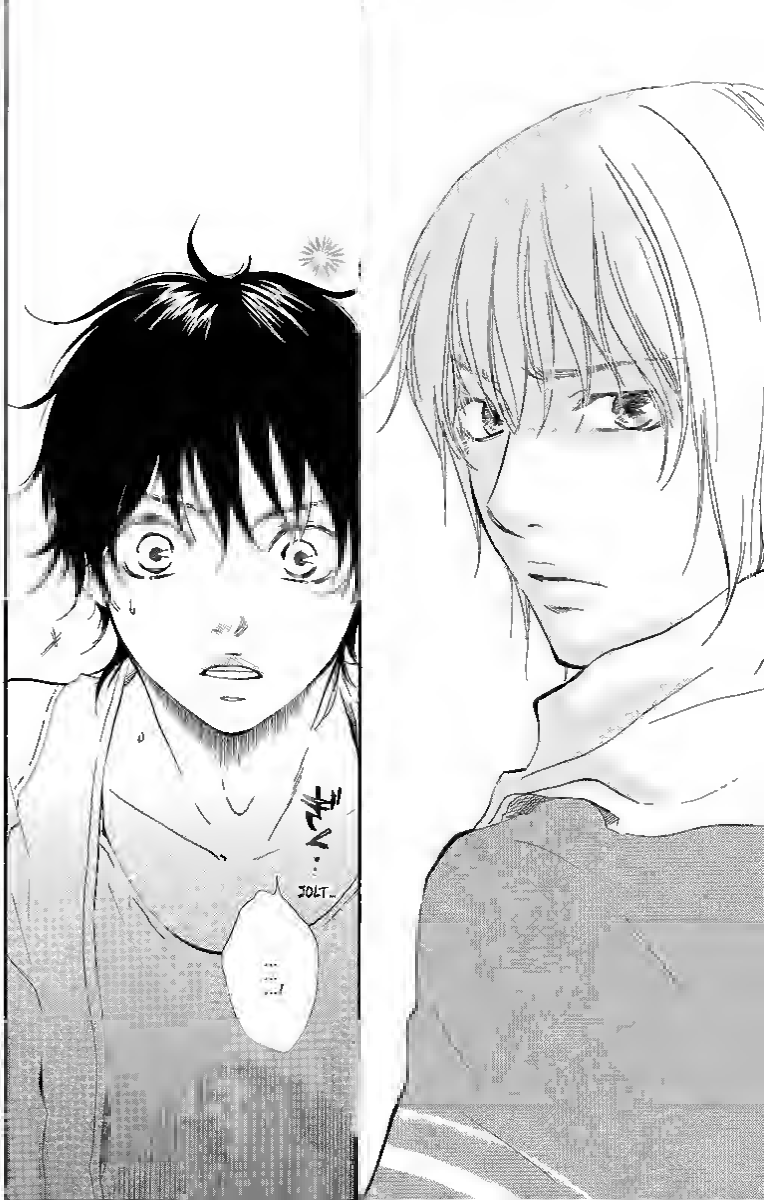
I'M NOT GOING
I WON'T GO
...IT'S NOT LIKE I REALLY WANT TO GO, EITHER.
COME ON!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT, GAMOU?! LET'S GO!
YOU'RE ALWAYS TURNING EVERYONE DOWN
HOW MANY HAVE YOU REJECTED?

GETTING INTO A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH A NORMAL GIRL -
. . . BUT -
"IT JUST DOESN'T MATTER TO ME THAT YOU'RE A BOY."
"... UM, ACTUALLY, I LIKE GIRLS..."
KEIGO!
I ALREADY TOLD HER THERE'D BE FOUR OF US!
YOU'D BETTER COME!
I THINK IT'D BE BETTER FOR KEIGO THAT WAY

TAP TAP
KEIGO!
KNOCK KNOCK
HUSH...
HEY - ANSWER ME!
GRRAK!
I'M COMING IN!
BAM!
HEY!
CLATTER
THUMP
THUMP
WE'RE MEETING AT ONE TOMORROW.

NO
I'M NOT GOING
I'VE BEEN TELLING YOU THAT SINCE THIS MORNING.

I'M DOING THIS FOR YOUR SAKE!
YOU SET UP THIS PLAN ON YOUR OWN.
IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ME
LOOK - FOUR OF THEM ARE ALREADY GOING TO BE THERE.
MRSH
!!!


JOLT
...
...!

BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
W...
WHAT...
KEIGO?!
BA-THUMP
FOR MY SAKE?
MAKING ME WATCH YOU ON A DATE WITH A GIRL - THAT'S FOR MY SAKE?
EVEN WHEN YOU YOURSELF WON'T TRY TURNING YOUR EYES TO ME, CHIHIRO?
...!
NO. THAT'S NOT IT.
I'M SAYING YOU SHOULD TRY TURNING YOUR EYES TO OTHER PEOPLE BESIDES ME.

...
...!
YOU'RE THE SAME WAY...

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT COMING FROM YOU.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO MAKE YOU LOOK MY WAY CHIHIRO...?
...!
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP

?
?!
WHA-
THUD!
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
GRIP..
BA-THUMP

I... DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THIS STRONG... DAMN... HE'S GOT BIG HANDS...
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
I GUESS I SHOULD'VE KNOWN...
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
M...
MY VOICE... WON'T COME OUT...
BA-THUMP
AFTER ALL, HE'S BIGGER THAN I AM...
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
"I LOVE YOU, CHIHIRO."
"I TOTALLY LOVE YOU!!"
BA-THUMP

BA-THUMP
A...
AREN'T YOU... ALWAYS SAYING YOU LIKE ME NO MATTER HOW I AM...?
I HATE YOU RIGHT NOW, CHIHIRO.
"I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!"
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP

...
SQUINT
YIKES -
...HUH?
PLOP
HUH?!
EEK

?!
...WATER?

...KEIGO?
SNIFF
SNIFF
GET OUT...

...OKAY.
I'M NOT GOING TOMORROW.
SNIFF
CLATTER

PA
THUMP...
"I'M SAYING YOU SHOULD TRY TURNING YOUR EYES TO OTHER PEOPLE BESIDES ME."
"I'M DOING THIS FOR YOUR SAKE!"
SORRY FOR SCARING YOU.
CHIHIRO...
?!

"YOU'RE THE SAME WAY!"
"YOU WON'T TRY TURNING YOUR EYES TO ME EITHER, CHIHIRO."
HE SAID HE HATES ME -
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

PART 6

I'M REALLY SORRY!
IT'S OKAY, SAKURADA-SAN!
I CONTACTED THE OTHER GIRLS ABOUT IT YESTERDAY
IS GAMOU-SAN OKAY?

OH, IS THAT RIGHT?
KEIGO?
OH, IT'S JUST A REGULAR COLD
WITHOUT KEIGO, THE GROUP DATE WAS AN UNEVEN 3-TO-4.
YOU TAKE YOUR TIME WITH MIKI-CHAN
THE FIVE OF US ARE GONNA HEAD INTO THE MARINE AQUARIUM AHEAD OF YOU
HEY SAKURADA!
...
OKAY, LET'S GO!
CHATTER
I WANT TO SEE THE PENGUINS! ♡
SEA OTTERS FOR ME! ♡
CHATTER
HUH? WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?!
GOOD LUCK, MIKI ♡

"I HATE YOU RIGHT NOW, CHIHIRO."
THE ONLY REASON I SET THIS UP WAS FOR KEIGO'S SAKE IN THE FIRST PLACE -
"YOU SET UP THIS PLAN ON YOUR OWN."
"IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH ME."

SORRY.
SHALL WE GET GOING, TOO?
SAKURA-DA-SAN
OH...!
HUH?
SAKURADA-SAN!
...N!
??
HUH-
WHY DO YOU ASK? OF COURSE NOT!
NOT AT ALL.
DO YOU DISLIKE BEING ALONE WITH ME?

HOW PATHETIC...
UM -
CAN I ASK -
I...
I CAN'T KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING...
NOT AT ALL...
WHAT IS IT... THAT YOU LIKE ABOUT ME?
WHA-?!
IT...
IT'S YOUR CUTENESS...
AND, UM...
I'M NOT VERY FOND OF MANLY TYPES... SO YOU'RE, LIKE, THE IDEAL TYPE FOR ME, SAKURADA-SAN...
YOU SEE, I LIKE HELLO KITTY AND CUTE THINGS LIKE THAT...

BEING CALLED "CUTE" BY A GIRL WHO'S SO CUTESY HERSELF...
NOT MANLY
CUTE
AT THE SAME LEVEL AS HELLO KITTY?!
OH... I SEE
I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T TALK LIKE THIS TO SOMEONE SENIOR TO ME!
?!
DOES IT MEAN I CAN EXPECT A GOOD RESPONSE FROM YOU...?
UM, SAKURADA-SAN...
THE FACT THAT YOU INVITED ME OUT TODAY -
COULD IT BE THAT THERE'S ALREADY SOMEONE ELSE YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH?
"LOVE"?
OH...
UH, WELL...
IT'S UHH...
I'M SORRY... BUT THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN

WELL, THERE IS SOMEONE WHO'S ON MY MIND A LOT.
...SOMEONE I CAN'T SEEM TO IGNORE.
I SEE..
I'M NOT AS AFFECTED EMOTIONALLY BY THIS GIRL'S "LIKE"...
...AS I AM BY KEIGO'S "HATE"...

HANDMADE CHOUX A LA CREME
THE CHOUX FACTORY
OH MY -
HOW UNUSUAL! WHAT BROUGHT THIS ON?
A GIFT FROM ME
I'M HOME -
WHERE'S KEIGO?
OH, YES - KEIGO-KUN.
OTHER THAN DINNERTIME HE'S BEEN SHUT INSIDE HIS ROOM ALL DAY... I WONDER WHAT'S WRONG?
I WONDER IF HE'S TROUBLED ABOUT SOMETHING? HE'S BECOME WITHDRAWN SO SUDDENLY...
I KNOW HE WAS A SHUT-IN BEFORE SO I'VE LEFT HIM TO HIMSELF BUT...
DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT, CHIHIRO?
- I DO... BUT IT'S NOT SOMETHING I CAN TELL HER!

KNOCK KNOCK
KEIGO
...KEIGO?
I'M COMING IN, OKAY?!
カラミ
CLAK
!

OH.
WELCOME BACK
WHOA -
CHIHIRO?
WHAT IS THIS...?
UH. .
I BROUGHT BACK SOME CREAM PUFFS
THANKS. JUST LEAVE IT THERE

KEIGO SEEMS DISTANT
- WHY?
LOOK AT ME!

KEIGO...
HE'S JUST BEING GRUMPY AGAIN
LEAVE HIM.
MORNING
THAT CHILD -
SIGH
キィ
CREAK
CHIHIRO?!
WHAT ABOUT BREAKFAST?! WHERE'S KEIGO-KUN?!
I'M OFF.
IT'S MONDAY, THE TIME IS 7:15 COMING UP NEXT -
ENTERTAIN-MENT NEWS AND SPORTS.
ギョッ!
JUMP
OH MY! YOU'RE UP EARLY!

EVER SINCE THAT NIGHT -
KEIGO WON'T EVEN LOOK AT ME
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
KA-TAK
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE. NEXT STOP -
PSHHT...
I GUESS IT'S TO BE EXPECTED...
CLENCH
AFTER ALL, HE SAID HE HATED ME...
...

?!
JUMP!
WHAT THE--
ARE YOU SERIOUS?! DAMMIT... WHO IS IT?!
KNOCK KNOCK
"HASN'T HAPPENED TO ME IN A WHILE"...?
THE GUY BEHIND ME?! JERK!
THIS HASN'T HAPPENED TO ME IN A WHILE, WHY NOW?!
FIVE SECONDS UNTIL I LOSE IT!
GRIP
SLIDE...

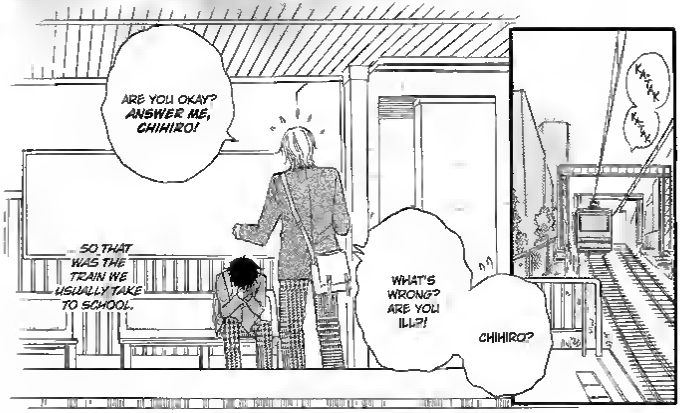
FOR THOSE DISEMBARKING, PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE ALL YOUR BELONGINGS -
I GET IT. IT'S BECAUSE KEIGO WAS ALWAYS THERE.
KNIK KNIK
WE WILL SOON BE REACHING XX STATION.
XX STATION - XX STATION -
PSHHT -
WHSH
PSHHT -
THE TRAIN IS NOW LEAVING
THUMP

GOD THIS PISSES ME OFF...!
WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO GET OFF THE TRAIN BEFORE MY STOP...?
SIGH
THUD
KKUNK
KKUNK
KKUNK
"CHIHIRO!"

CHIHIRO!
I'LL ALWAYS LIKE YOU, OKAY?!
EVEN WHEN I'M NOT HERE...!
OKAY
ME TOO, KEIGO
I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK, OKAY?!
SOB
EVER SINCE WE WERE LITTLE, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN TELLING ME HE LIKES ME...
WHETHER IT'S "LIKE" AS A FRIEND, OR "LIKE" AS A LOVER...

I HATE YOU RIGHT NOW, CHIHIRO.
THAT TIME .
..I SHOULD'VE JUST KISSED HIM TO SHUT HIM UP BEFORE HE COULD SAY ANYTHING
I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE THIS PAINFUL TO HAVE KEIGO TELL ME HE HATES ME.....
...!

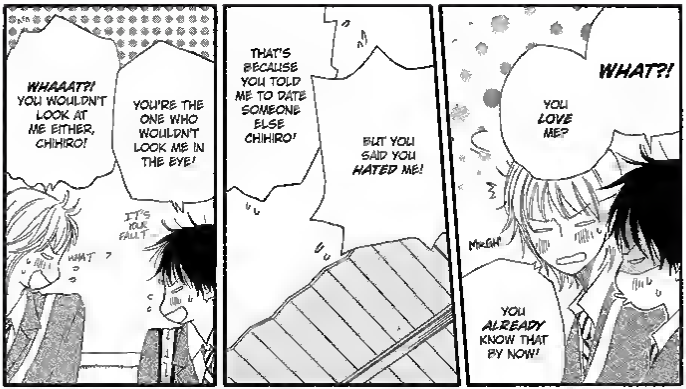
XX STATION, XX STATION -
PSHHT -
1178
GRRAK -
CH-
CHIHIRO?!
?!
RRRRRING
PHEEE -


ARE YOU OKAY? ANSWER ME, CHIHIRO!
...SO THAT WAS THE TRAIN WE USUALLY TAKE TO SCHOOL.
WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU ILL?
CHIHIRO?
KKKNK KKKNK

WHY'D YOU GET OFF? YOU'LL BE TARDY...
SNIFFLE
...I'M FINE.
IT'S NOTHING... DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.

ストン
THUNK
...

NOW THAT YOU HATE ME
. I GUESS I WON'T BE ABLE TO STAY AT YOUR HOUSE MUCH LONGER
WHAT?!
I SUPPOSE IT'S MY FAULT FOR PUSHING YOU DOWN LIKE THAT...
YOU WON'T EVEN LOOK AT ME. .
BUT I LOVE YOU, CHIHIRO -
SO I'M NOT GOING TO APOLOGIZE

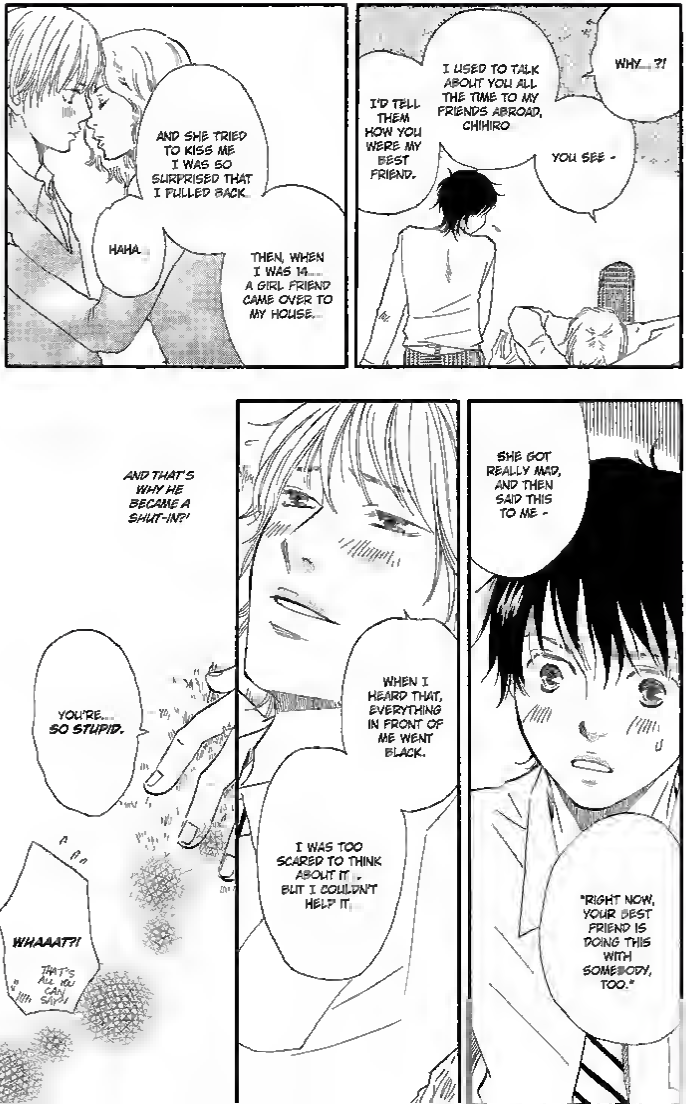

WHAAAT?! YOU WOULDN'T LOOK AT ME EITHER, CHIHIRO!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WOULDN'T LOOK ME IN THE EYE!
IT'S YOUR FAULT
WHAT ?
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO DATE SOMEONE ELSE CHIHIRO!
BUT YOU SAID YOU HATED ME!
WHAT?!
YOU LOVE ME?
MNGH
YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT BY NOW!

THE TRAIN IS APPROACHING ON TRACK NUMBER 2 PLEASE REMAIN BEHIND THE WHITE LINE -
HEY
WHAT?
KKKK
KKKKK
KKKKK
KK

KEIGO
WANNA DITCH SCHOOL?
IS STANDING HERE IN FRONT OF ME.
THIS IS A PRETTY WHOLESOME PLACE TO PLAY HOOKY IN
THE PARK?
WE'D STAND OUT TOO MUCH IF WE WANDERED AROUND TOWN THIS EARLY ON A MONDAY MORNING IN OUR UNIFORMS
...
...
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE...
HUH? YOU'RE NOT GONNA COMPLAIN?
YOU ALWAYS TELL ME NOT TO CALL IT A DATE
OH, I KNOW THAT BUT THIS IS NICE
BESIDES, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO GO ON A DATE IN THE PARK WITH YOU!

MMM -
THIS FEELS GOOD!
EVEN WHEN I WAS IN VIENNA OR PARIS
I ALWAYS USED TO LOOK UP AT THE SKY LIKE THIS.
- COME TO THINK OF IT, I ALWAYS SEE YOU LOOKING AT THE SKY FROM THE VERANDA, TOO

I'D THINK TO MYSELF, "THIS SAME SKY IS CONNECTED TO THE PLACE WHERE CHIHIRO IS."
AND THAT WOULD MAKE ME FEEL HAPPY.
- I'D LOOK UP AT THE SKY.
WHENEVER I WANTED TO SEE YOU SO BADLY I COULDN'T STAND IT -
...HEY..
SO. WHEN DID YOU FIRST START LIKING ME?
...WHEN I WAS 14.
?!


AND SHE TRIED TO KISS ME I WAS SO SURPRISED THAT I PULLED BACK.
HAHA.
THEN, WHEN I WAS 14... A GIRL FRIEND CAME OVER TO MY HOUSE...
I USED TO TALK ABOUT YOU ALL THE TIME TO MY FRIENDS ABROAD, CHIHIRO
I'D TELL THEM HOW YOU WERE MY BEST FRIEND.
YOU SEE -
WHY...?!
SHE GOT REALLY MAD, AND THEN SAID THIS TO ME -
"RIGHT NOW, YOUR BEST FRIEND IS DOING THIS WITH SOMEBODY, TOO."
WHEN I HEARD THAT, EVERYTHING IN FRONT OF ME WENT BLACK.
I WAS TOO SCARED TO THINK ABOUT IT , BUT I COULDN'T HELP IT.
AND THAT'S WHY HE BECAME A SHUT-IN?!
YOU'RE... SO STUPID.
WHAAAT?!
THAT'S ALL YOU CAN SAY?!

DUMMY.

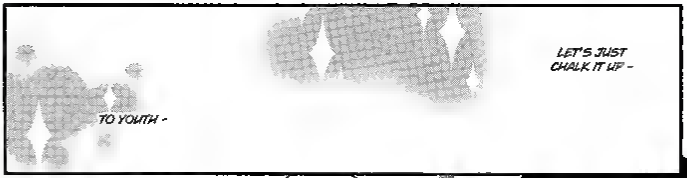
AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH ME, I DON'T CARE. DAMMIT.
CH- CH- CH-
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE.
CHIHIRO?!
WHAT?
U... UM... I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN BY THAT
I'M SAYING YOU'RE IMPORTANT TO ME, TOO!
WHY?!
?! REALLY?
YOU 'DON'T CARE'? DAMMIT??
YOU'RE BEING INSULTED, RIGHT?
THANK YOU -
CHIHIRO

OH -
I LOVE YOU.

I REALLY DO HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR KEIGO
I DIDN'T REALIZE
RUSTLE RUSTLE
OH. I LEFT IT ON VIBRATE
?!
YOU GOT MAIL?
NO MUST BE A CALL
ヴヴヴ
ヴヴヴ
ヴヴヴ
INCOMING
MOM
ピーッ
URK!
I DON'T WANT TO ANSWER IT
DUUUN -
H-...

!!!
SCREECH
JUMP
SPLAT
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!! CHIHIRO! WHERE'S KEIGO-KUN?!
DON'T RUN AWAY, KEIGO! NO FAIR!
KEIGO-KUN'S GOT HIS CELL TURNED OFF! ARE YOU GUYS TOGETHER?!
I JUST GOT A CALL FROM SCHOOL ASKING ME IF YOU WERE OUT SICK TODAY!
DRIP...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'VE GOT TO APOLOGIZE TO MRS SAKURADA WHEN I GET HOME...
DROOP...
I HAVE SOME E-MAILS TOO - FROM TAKAHARA AND OHGAKI

LET'S HAVE A PROPER DATE NEXT TIME
YEAH!
ONE DAY, A CHILDHOOD FRIEND -



FORCED TO SIT IN HALL AS PUNISHMENT
QUIT KIDDING AROUND DAMMIT!?
I'M GONNA TAKE A PHOTO
WOW! HOW EMBARRASSING! IT'S LIKE A MONUMENT TO UNCOOLNESS.
MY LEGS HURT...
NOT USED TO SITTING ON KNEES BECAUSE HE LIVED OVERSEAS FOR SO LONG!

NEW BEGINNINGS • END

AFTERWORD
I HOPE YOU ENJOYED "NEW BEGINNINGS"
SINCE I'M FROM OSAKA MYSELF, IT'S FUN PORTRAYING CHARACTERS WITH OSAKA ACCENTS. BUT REAL OSAKA-SPEAK IS MUCH MORE INTENSE VLOG- (LAUGH)
I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE PUBLISHERS FOR THE EXTRAVAGANT - AND VERY COOL - DUAL RELEASE OF TWO VOLUMES THIS TIME AROUND! OF COURSE, I THANK EACH ONE OF YOU WHO BOUGHT THEM, TOO!
HELLO. I'M KOTETSUKO YAMAMOTO. KEIGO, THE KOU CHARACTER IN "NEW BEGINNINGS", IS A FAVORITE CHARACTER OF MINE. OH, BUT OF COURSE I LIKE CHIHIRO, TOO (LAUGH) - HE'S SUCH A SCAMP THAT HE'S FUN TO DRAW. MY CONSTANT GOAL IS TO CREATE CHARACTERS WHICH READERS WILL COME TO LOVE, TOO. BUT IT SEEMS LIKE I'M ALWAYS SAYING THAT (BITTER SMILE) WELL, IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS (LAUGH). I'M DRAWING A CONTINUATION OF THIS STORY IN CRAFT MAGAZINE, SO I HOPE YOU'LL CONTINUE TO LOOK WARMLY OVER THESE TWO'S CONTINUED RELATIONSHIP BY THE WAY, I HOPE YOU'LL ALSO TAKE A LOOK AT THE BOOK INCLUDED AS A PRESENT WHEN YOU PURCHASE THE TWO-BOOK SET. I'LL CONTINUE TO WORK HARD!
IT'S A BOOKLET. WELL, SEE YOU AGAIN. KOTETSUKO YAMAMOTO
KEIGO'S HEIGHT I NEVER GAVE IT MUCH THOUGHT, BUT I'VE JUST DECIDED ON IT - 186 CM. SO TALL AS TO BE ANNOYING!